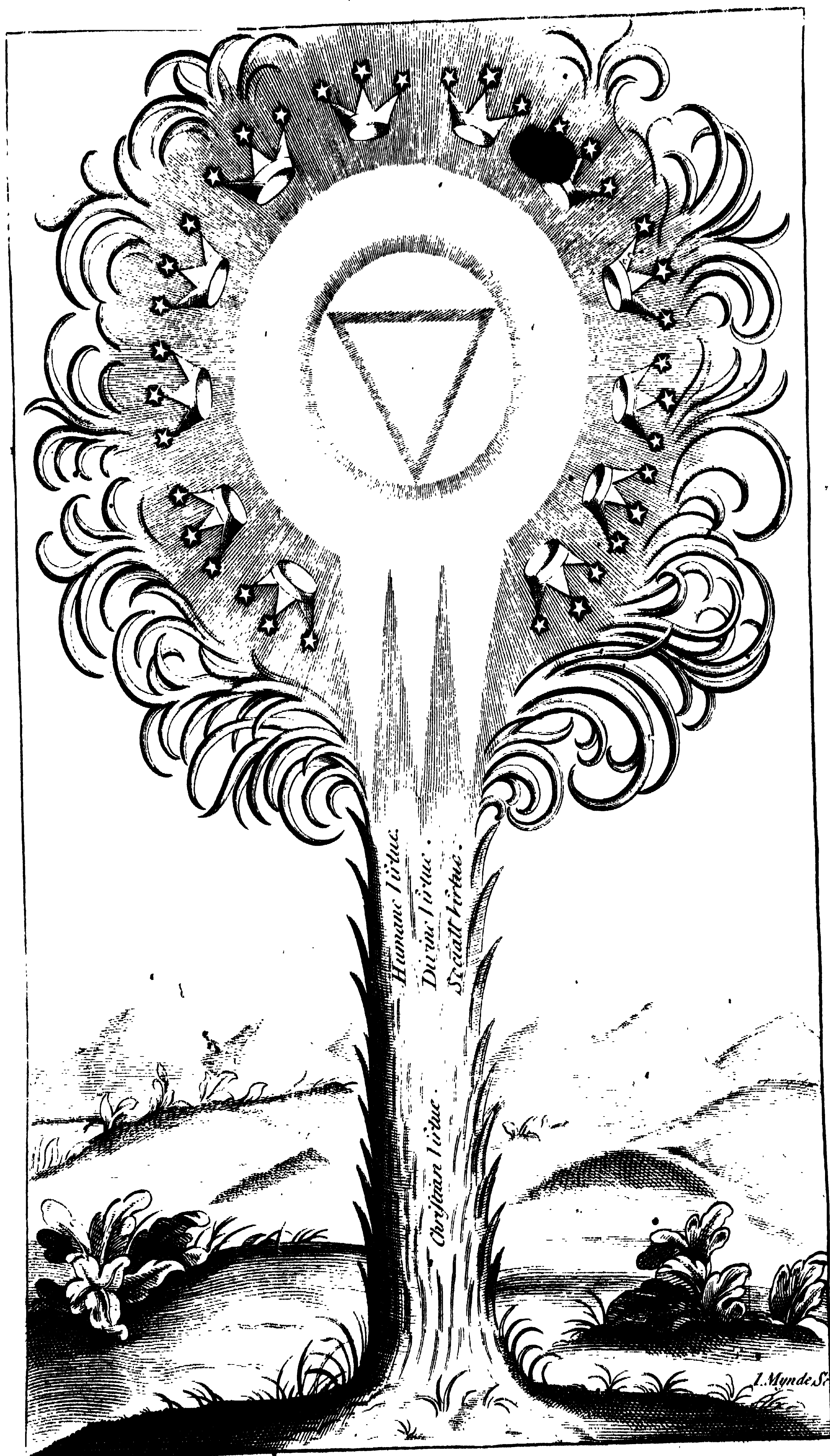

Humane Virtue
Divine Virtue.
Sociall Virtue.
Christian Virtue.
I. Mynde Sc.

THE
CHRISTIAN LIFE,
FROM ITS
BEGINNING
TO ITS
CONSUMMATION in GLORY.

WITH

Proper and Uſeful *INDEXES*.

BY

JOHN SCOTT, D. D.
Rector of St. *Giles*'s in the Fields.

The NINTH EDITION.



LONDON:
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M.DCC.XXIX.



TO THE

Right Honourable

AND

Right Reverend Father in GOD,

HENRY

Lord Bishop of *LONDON*,

And one of His Majesty's most Honourable Privy-Council; &c.

My LORD,

THAT I presume to lay these Papers at your Lordship's feet, is not because I imagine they *deserve*, but because I am conscious they *need* so great a Patronage. Not but that, were the Discourses they contain as great and meritorious as their Argument, they might safely shelter themselves under their own Deserts, and challenge *Homage*, instead of begging *Protection*: But tho I have done my best Endeavour to treat this great Theme suitably to its own Native Majesty, yet I am very sensible it hath not escaped the too common Fate of all such sublime and excellent Subjects, which is to be foul'd and sully'd by coarse handling. But my Lot falling in this unhappy Age, wherein the best *Church* and *Religion* in the World are in such apparent Danger of being Crucified, like their blessed Author, between those Two Thieves (and both, alas, impenitent ones) *Superstition* and *Enthusiasm*, I thought my self obliged not to sit still, as an unconcern'd Spectator of the *Tragedy*, but in my little Sphere, and according to my poor Ability, to endeavour its Prevention: And considering that the most effectual Means the *Romanists* have used to subvert *this* Church, which they so much *envy*, and all the Reformations do so much *admire* and *depend* on, hath been to *divide* her own Children from her, and *arm* them against her, by starting new Opinions among them, and engaging their Zeal (which was wont to be imploy'd to better Purposes) in hot Disputes about the *Modes* and *Circumstances* of her Worship:

I thought a Discourse of the *Christian Life*, which is the proper Sphere of Christian *Zeal*, might be a good Expedient to take Men off from those dangerous *Contentions* which were *kindled* and are *fed* and *blown* by such as design our common Ruin. For sure, did our People thorowly understand what 'tis to be Christians *indeed*, and how much Duty that implies, they could never find so much Leisure as they do to quarrel and wrangle about *Trifles*.

This, my Lord, is the sincere Design of what I here present to your Lordship; and however it may *succeed*, I have this Satisfaction, that *I meant well*, and have express'd my Good-will to this poor *envied* Church, whose truly primitive Constitution, pure and undefiled Religion, I shall always admire and reverence; and whatsoever her Fate may be, I am chain'd to her Fortunes by my *Reason* and *Conscience*, and shall ever esteem it more eligible to be crusht by her Fall, which God avert, than to flourish and triumph on her Ruins.

But among the *many* ill Omens that threaten our Church, there is *one* which seems to presage its Prosperity; and that is that such Eminent Stations in it, as your Lordship's, are so excellently supplied. For altho whether the Part you are designed for, be to grace her *Triumphs* or her *Funeral*, is known only to the Sovereign Disposer of Events; yet this, *my Lord*, all that wish well to our Church conclude, that God bestow'd *You* upon her as a Token of Love. For which they have sufficient Warrant even from the Daily Experience they have of the Prudence and Vigilance of your Government; the Piety, Integrity, and Generosity of your Temper; of your invincible Loyalty to your Prince; your undaunted Zeal for the Reformed Religion, and your grave and obliging Deportment towards all you converse with. I shall trouble your Lordship no farther, but conclude this Address with that which I am sure is the hearty Prayer of all your honest Clergy, That the God of Heaven would long continue your Lordship a Blessing to the Church, and to this Diocese, an Honour to your Sacred Order, and the Noble Stock you descend from; and if what I here present, prove but so prosperous as to do some Good in the World, and obtain your Lordship's Acceptance, it will be a noble Compensation of this well-meant Endeavour. I am,

Your Lordship's most Humble

and most Obedient Servant,

JOHN SCOTT.

THE
PREFACE.

I *Shall not trouble the Reader with a long Apology for the Publication of the ensuing Treatise, tho I might plead (as other Authors do) the Importunity of Friends, whose Judgments I very much reverence. For to say the Truth, I do by no means think that in an Affair of this Nature, it is safe or fit for a Man to be over-borne by the Persuasions of those, whose* Judgments *he hath just cause to suspect may be brib'd by their Friendships: And therefore had I not hoped that in such an Age as this, (wherein, thro' our own* Divisions *and* Debaucheries, *both in* Opinion *and* Practice, *and the Hellish Contrivances of our* Enemies, *we have such a dismal Prospect of Things before us) these Papers might be of some* Use *to Religion and the Souls of Men, I would never have troubled the World with them; but hoping they might, I have ventured upon that reason to publish them.*

I have for some Years been a sorrowful Spectator of the black Cloud that is gathering over my Native Country, and I must confess have not been without my share of the Fears *and* Anxieties *of the Age: but being at last quite sick of looking* downwards *upon this uncomfortable Scene of Things, I had no other way to relieve my oppressed Thoughts, but to raise them above this miserable World, and entertain them with the* Comforts *of Religion, and the* Hopes *of a better State beyond the Grave; wherein, I thank God, I have found such* Rest *and* Satisfaction *of Mind, as render'd my blackest Apprehensions of the ensuing Storm very* tolerable. *And now because I would not eat my Morsel* alone, *and enjoy my Satisfaction to* myself, *I have endeavoured, by this following Treatise of Heaven, and the Way thither, to* break *and* distribute *it among my distressed Neighbours; that so by carrying their Minds from these* dismal *Expectations into the* quiet *and* happy *Regions above, and directing their Lives and Actions* thither, *I might communicate to them the blessed Art how to live* happily *in a distracted World. And methinks, when our* present *State is so perplex'd and un-*

certain, we should be more than ordinarily concern'd to make sure of something, and to provide for a future Well-being, that so we may not be miserable in both Worlds.. As for the Argument *I have undertaken, I may, without breach of Modesty, say, it is a great and a* noble *one; it is the* Christian Life, *which, next to the* Angelical, *approaches nearest to the Life of God. But as for the* Management *of it, all that I can say, is this, I have imploy'd my* best *Thoughts and Skill about it; and if, after this, I have any where* wrong'd *or* misrepresented *it, it is more my* Unhappiness *than my* Fault. *Perhaps it may be thought that in the* First Three Chapters *I have discours'd more* speculatively *than 'tis fit in a Book that is design'd for* common *Use and Edification; but it may be, when the Reader hath considered the* Nature *of the Arguments I have there handled, and how necessarily they fall in with my* Design, *he will be convinc'd that 'twas* unavoidable. *And yet I doubt not, but with a little Diligence and Attention of Mind, the* plainest *Reader may be able to comprehend the main Reason and* Evidence *of what I drive at.*

In the First Place, I thought 'twould be necessary, in treating of the Christian Life, *to give some Account of the blessed* End *it refers to, that so from the Nature of that, we might be the better able to judge of the* Necessity *and* Usefulness *of those* Means *which Christianity prescribes in order to it. And this I have endeavoured in the* First Chapter; *where I have only so far explain'd the Nature of the Heavenly State and Felicities, as was necessary to light and conduct us thro' the ensuing Design.*

In the Second Place, I judg'd it would be no less expedient to give some general *Account of what* kinds *of Means are necessary to our obtaining this* End; *that so we might be convinced how requisite both the* principal *and* instrumental *Parts of the* Christian Life *are to our Everlasting Happiness. And this I have attempted in the* Second Chapter; *wherein, from the Consideration of the vast Distance there is between the* pure *and* blessed *State of Heaven, and this* corrupt *and degenerate State of Human Nature, I have endeavour'd to shew that 'tis not only necessary for us to* practise *and* acquire *those Christian Virtues, in the Perfection whereof the Heavenly Bliss consists; but that to enable us to practise, acquire and improve them, there are sundry* other *instrumental Duties indispensibly necessary; which Duties, as I have there proved, are of no other* Use *or*

 Signi-

Significancy *in Religion, than as they are* Means *of Virtue and Piety.*

And having thus distributed the Means into their proper Kinds and Order, I have in the Third Chapter *treated largely of the* First *Kind, to wit, the Practice of the* Christian Virtues; *in which, I confess, I have neither handled the particular Virtues in their full* Extent *and* Latitude, *nor enforc'd them with all their* moral Reasons; *that being done already to excellent purpose in those Two incomparable Treatises of* Holy Living and Dying, *and of* The Whole Duty of Man. *Nor could I have done it without swelling this Discourse, which is large enough already, into a Volume too large for common Use. And indeed, all that was necessary to* my Purpose, *was only so far to explain the Nature of each particular Virtue, as that the Reader might thereby understand what is meant by them: But that which most concern'd me in pursuance of my* main *Design, was to prove, that the Practice of every Virtue is an* essential *Part of the* Christian Life, *and a* necessary *Means to the blessed End of it. And accordingly, as I have shewn from the express Commands of our Religion, our* indispensible *Obligation to practice every Virtue; so I have endeavoured to shew how in the Practise of it we do naturally* grow up *to the Heavenly State: as, on the contrary, how in the course of a sinful Life, we do by a necessary Efficiency gradually* sink *ourselves into the State of the Damned. For I have proved at large, that there is something of* Heaven *and* Hell *in the very Nature of each particular* Virtue *and* Vice, *and that in the Perfection of these Two opposite* Qualities *consists the main* Happiness *and* Misery *of those Two opposite* States. *From whence it will necessarily follow, that as in the Practice of the one or t'other we grow more* Virtuous *or* Vicious; *so proportionably we rise up towards* Heaven, *or sink down towards* Hell, *by a fatal Tendency of Nature. The Truth of which is not only acknowledged by the generality of* Christian Writers, *but also by the best and wisest of the* Heathen Philosophers; *tho this I think, is the* First *Attempt that hath been made to derive the Heavenly and the Hellish States from the nature of the particular Virtues and Vices. I pray God that what I have said may but engage some more* skilful *Pen in the Prosecution of this* noble *Argument. For I know nothing in the World that can be more effectual to engage Men to be* substantially *Religious, to take them off from* Hypocrisy *and* Formality, *from all* presumptuous *Hopes, and* falſe

false *Dependencies, than their being thorowly convinc'd of this Truth, That the Eternal* Happiness *or* Misery *of Souls, is founded in their* Virtue *or* Vice; *and that there is as* inseparable *a Connexion between* Grace *and* Glory, Sin *and* Hell, *as there is between* Fire *and* Heat, Frost *and* Cold, *or any other necessary* Cause *and its* Effect. *For if they were but thorowly persuaded of* this, *they would easily discern what wretched* Nonsense *it is, to think of going to Heaven, or escaping Hell, whilst they continue in any wilful Course of* Disobedience *to the* Laws *of* Virtue.

Having thus treated at large of the First *Sort of Means by which the End of our* Christian Life *is to be obtained, I proceed in the* Fourth Chapter, *which is the largest of all, to give an Account of the* Second, viz. *the* Instrumental Duties *of Christianity, which are injoin'd us as Means subservient to our Practice, Acquisition and Improvement of those* Heavenly Virtues *in the Perfection whereof our chief Happiness consists. And for the more distinct handling of these, I have considered Men under a* Threefold *State, with respect to the* Christian Life; *First, as* entring *into it*; *Secondly, as* actually engaged *in it*; *Thirdly, as* perfecting *and* improving *themselves by* Perseverance *in it*; *to each of which I have* appropriated *such of the* Instrumental Duties *as I conceive did more* especially *belong to them. 'Tis true, some of the Duties here treated of, are not* purely *instrumental, but of a* mix'd *Nature, such as* Faith, Prayer, actual Dedication of our good Works to God, *&c. which are* essential *Parts of Divine Worship, and, as such, do belong to those* Divine Virtues, *the Perfection whereof makes a Principal Part of the everlasting Happiness of Souls. But* here *I have considered them only as* Means *and* Instruments *in the Use of which we are to acquire and perfect those* Beatifical *Virtues. And of this sort of Means, I do not remember any* one *Particular recommended in Holy Scripture, but what hath been here treated of. Upon* some, *indeed, I have insisted much more* briefly *than upon* others, *because I find them already* largely *accounted for in other Practical Books, and especially in those Two excellent Treatises above-named; but those which* they *either cursorily touch, or take no notice of at all, I thought myself obliged to give a* larger *Account of.*

From

From the whole, I would recommend to the pious Reader the Consideration of the admirable Structure *and* Contrivance *of the* Practical Part *of Christianity, which having proposed to us an* End *so great and sublime, and so highly worthy of our most vigorous Prosecutions, hath also furnish'd us with such choice and effectual* Means *of all sorts to attain it. The Consideration of which would be in itself a great Inducement to me to believe* Christianity *a* Divine Religion, *tho I were utterly unacquainted with its* External *Evidence and Motives of Credibility. For it can never enter into my Head, that such a* rare *and* exquisite *Contrivance to make Men* good *and* happy, *could ever owe its Original to the mere Invention of a* Carpenter's *Son, and a Company of illiterate* Fishermen. *Especially considering how far it excels the Moral Precepts even of those* Divine Philosophers *who believed a future State of a blessed Immortality, and exercised their best Wit, in prescribing* Rules *to guide and direct Men thither.*

And having given this large Account of the Instrumental Duties *of the* Christian Life, *and also enforced the several Divisions of them with proper* Arguments *and Motives, I thought fit to add a* Fifth Chapter, *wherein I have given some* Rules *for the more profitable* reading *of this Practical Discourse, and also some general* Directions *for the Exercise of our* private Religion, *in all the different States of the* Christian Life, *together with certain* Forms *of* private Devotion, *fitted for each State. In which I have supposed, what I doubt is a very deplorable Truth,* viz. *That the generality of Christians, after their* Initiation *by* Baptism *into the Publick Profession of Christianity, are so unhappy as to be seduced either thro' bad* Example *or* Education *into a* vicious *State of Life; and that consequently from* thence *they must take their First start into the thorow Practice of Christianity. Not that I make the least doubt, but that there are a great many excellent Christians, who, by the blessing of God upon their pious Education, have been secured from this Calamity, and trained up from their Infancy under a prevailing Sense of God and Religion; and therefore for such as these, as there is no need of that solemn Method of* Repentance, *prescribed in the* First Section *of the* Fourth Chapter, *so neither is there of those First* Penitential Prayers *in this* Fifth Chapter, *which is accommodated to that State. For these Persons have long since been* actually engaged *in the* Christian Life, *and, as 'tis to be supposed, have made considerable*

ſiderable Improvements *in it, and therefore as they are only concern'd in the Duties of the* Second *and* Third *States of the* Chriſtian Life, *ſo they are only to uſe the Prayers which are fitted to* thoſe *States, which with ſome variation of thoſe Phraſes, which ſuppoſe the paſt Courſe of our Life to have been* vicious, *they may eaſily accommodate to their own Condition. But the Deſign of this Diſcourſe is not only to conduct them* onwards *in their Way, who have already* entered *upon the* Chriſtian Life, *but alſo to reduce thoſe to it, who have been ſo unhappy as to* wander *into vicious Courſes; or rather, tho it ſerves* both *Purpoſes, 'tis wholly deſigned for the ſame Perſons,* viz. *to* ſeek *and* bring back *thoſe loſt Sheep who have* ſtray'd *from the Paths of Chriſtian Piety and Virtue, and then to* lead *them on thro' all the intermediate Stages to the happy State of immortal Pleaſures at the end of them. And now if what hath been ſaid, ſhould by the Bleſſing of God, obtain its deſigned Effect upon any Perſon, I ask no other Requital for all the Pains it hath coſt me, but his earneſt Prayers to God for me, that after my beſt Endeavours to guide and direct* him *to Heaven, I may not fall ſhort of it* myſelf.

OF

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OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

CHAP. I.

Concerning the ultimate End of the Chriſtian Life.

IN order to our underſtanding what is the Nature, Uſe, and Excellency of any *Means*, it is neceſſary we ſhould have a true and genuine Notion of thoſe peculiar *Ends* which they drive at: For the Nature of them, as they are *Means*, conſiſts in being ſerviceable to ſome *End*; but to what they are particularly ſerviceable, muſt be collected from the Nature of thoſe particular *Ends* whereunto they are directed. And therefore till we know what thoſe particular *Ends* are, it is impoſſible we ſhould know whether they are *Means* or no; or, which is the ſame thing, whether they are ſerviceable to any *End* or *Purpoſe*.

It being, therefore, the Deſign of this *Work* to explain the Nature of the *Chriſtian Life*, it will be neceſſary (for the clearing of our way) to give ſome Account of the bleſſed *End* for which it is intended; which will very much contribute to our right underſtanding of the great uſefulneſs and ſubſerviency of each Part of it thereunto. Therefore,

I. I ſhall endeavour to ſhew what is the peculiar *End* of the *Chriſtian Life*.
II. Wherein the true Nature of this *End* conſiſts.

I. As for the *End* of the *Chriſtian Life*, we are aſſured from Scripture, That it is no other but *Heaven* itſelf, that State of endleſs *Bliſs* and *Happineſs* which God hath prepared in the World above, for the reception of all thoſe, *who by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for glory and honour and immortality*. That this is the *End* of the *Chriſtian Life*, is evident from hence, becauſe 'tis every where propoſed by our Saviour and his Apoſtles, as the Chief Good of a Chriſtian, and the Supreme Motive to all Chriſtian Virtue. For ſo St. *John*, that Boſom-Favourite of our Saviour, aſſures us, that *This is the Promiſe which Chriſt hath promiſed us, even Eternal Life*, 1 John ii. 25. And if we look into the Goſpel of St. *John*, who hath more largely recorded our Saviour's Sermons and Diſcourſes than any other Evangeliſt, we ſhall find *Eternal Life* ſtill propoſed by him as the ſuper-eminent Promiſe, to encourage and perſuade Men to the Profeſſion and Practice of *Chriſtianity*. For ſo, *John* iv. 36. 'tis propoſed by our Saviour, as that which is the Harveſt of a Chriſtian, to which, like the Husband-man's Plowing and Sowing, all our Care and Endeavour is to be directed; *He that reapeth receiveth Wages, and gathereth Fruit unto Eternal Life*. Conſonantly whereunto St. *Paul* tells us, that *he that ſoweth to the Spirit, ſhall of the Spirit reap Life everlaſting*, Gal. vi. 8. And this, as our Saviour tells us, is the great Reward which he gives to all thoſe that hear and follow him, *John* x. 27, 28. and this is the great Argument which he every where inſiſts on, That he that believeth hath *Life Everlaſting*, that whoſoever heareth his Word hath *Life Everlaſting*, and that his Commandment is *Life Everlaſting*. And *Rom*. vi. 22. *Everlaſting Life* is expreſly ſaid to be the End of *having our Fruit unto Holineſs*; and as ſuch we are bid to direct our Actions unto it; to *believe in Chriſt unto Everlaſting Life*, 1 Tim. i. 16. to do good, to this end, that we *may*

lay hold upon Eternal Life, 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19. *to look unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the Cross,* &c. *Heb.* xii. 2. And therefore *Heaven* is described to be the Christian *Canaan,* to which we are to direct all our steps, whilst we are travelling thro' this World, *Heb.* xi. 14, 15, 16. And the whole Life of a Christian is expressed by *seeking* it: *Matth.* vi. 33. *Heb.* xiii. 14. *Col.* iii. 1. And the *incorruptible* Crown is affirmed to be as much the End of the Race of the *Christian Life,* as those *corruptible* Crowns were of the Races in the *Olympick Games,* 1 *Cor.* ix. 25. For it is to *Eternal Glory* that we are *called,* 1 *Pet.* v. 10. 2 *Thess.* ii. 14. And in the discharge of all that Duty whereunto we are *called,* we are to *look* to this *blessed Hope,* as our great *End* and *Encouragement,* Tit. ii. 13.

This I have the more largely insisted upon, because of a great mistake that many Persons have lain under in this matter; which is, that the *Glory of God* is the only ultimate *End* of a Christian, and that this is a distinct *End* from *Heaven:* The first of which, I confess, is very true, but the last absolutely *false.* That the *Glory of God* is the last End of a Christian, is evident from those Texts which bid us *do all to the Glory of God,* 1 Cor. x. 13. and which make the *Glory of God* to be the point in which all the *Fruits of Righteousness* do concenter, *Phil.* i. 11. which propose this as the *End* of all Religious Performances, *That God in all Things may be glorified,* 1 Pet. iv. 11. and affirm, that 'tis to this purpose that we are chosen to be Christians, that we should be to the *Praise of his Glory,* Eph. i. 12. But that the *Glory of God* is no distinct *End* from our being made Partakers of the *Happiness* of *Heaven,* is as evident from hence, that this *Glory* consists not in any thing that we can add or contribute to him, whose essential Glory is so immense and secure, that there is nothing we can do, can either increase or diminish it; and there is no other Glory can redound to him from any thing without, but what is the Reflection of his own natural Rays. He understands himself too well, to value himself either the more or the less for the Praises or Dispraises of his Creatures. For he is enough of Stage and Theatre to himself, and hath the same satisfying Prospect of his own *Glory,* in the midst of all the loud *Blasphemies* of *Hell,* as among the perpetual *Hallelujahs of Heaven.* And having so, it cannot be supposed that he should enjoin us to praise and glorify him, for the sake of any Good or Advantage that can accrue to *Himself* by it, or out of any other Pleasure he takes in hearing himself applauded and commended by us, than he doth in any other Act that is decent and reasonable in its own Nature; but 'tis *therefore,* he will have us praise him, because he knows 'tis for *Our* Good, and highly conduces, as it is a most reasonable Action, to the Perfection and Happiness of our reasonable Natures; because our praising him, naturally excites us to imitate him, and to transcribe into *our own* Natures, those Adorable Perfections which we do so admire and extol in his. So that to pursue our own Perfection and Happiness, is to glorify God according to his own design and intention; who requires us to glorify *him* for no other purpose, but that thereby we may glorify *ourselves.* And indeed *our* Happiness is *God's* Glory, even as *all* other worthy *Effects* are the Glory of their *Causes.* 'Tis *He* that gives being to it, and consequently *He* that is glorified by it. It being nothing but the resplendency of his own Almighty Goodness, or his own outstretched Rays shining back upon Himself. And therefore *we* aim at God's Glory just as *He himself* doth, when we aim to be as happy as He would have us; that is, when we pursue Heaven, and cooperate with his Infinite Goodness, whose great design is to advance us to that blessed Condition, in which we shall glorify him for ever, and be everlasting Monuments of his overflowing Benignity. So that whether we call our last End *Heaven,* or the *Glory of God,* it is all but one and the same thing; since by obtaining Heaven, we shall glorify him according to his own *Design* and *Intention.* And this, I think, may suffice to shew what is the true ultimate *End* of the *Christian Life.* But then,

II. It

II. It will be yet farther neceſſary, for our clearing the way to the Deſign in hand, to enquire what *kind* of *Happineſs* this is? Which when we underſtand, we ſhall be the better able to comprehend what *Duties* or *Means* are neceſſary for the obtaining it. And this Enquiry will be eaſily reſolved, by conſidering the Nature of *Thoſe* for whom it was prepared and intended. For all *Happineſs* conſiſts in the *free* and *vigorous Exerciſe* of the Faculties of Nature about Objects that are ſuitable to themſelves. There is, indeed, a *privative* Happineſs, which is nothing but *Indolence*, or *Freedom* from *Pain* and *Miſery*; and this conſiſts not ſo much in the *Exerciſe*, as in the *Reſt* and *Quiet* of the Faculties. And herein the ſoft and reſtive *Epicureans* placed the whole Happineſs of a Man: In which, I confeſs, they would not be very much miſtaken, if there were no Happineſs belonging to a Man, beyond that Animal and Senſual one, in which the Diſciples of this *Atheiſtical Philoſopher* placed their chief Good. For the greateſt part of the Pleaſures of Senſe, indeed, are meerly *Privations* of Miſery, and ſhort Reprieves from the Griefs and Troubles of a wretched Life. For what elſe is our *Eaſe* and *Reſt*, but only the removal of our *Pain* and *Wearineſs*? which being removed, the Pleaſure is preſently over, and then we grow weary again of our *Reſt* and *Eaſe*; till *Pain* and *Wearineſs* return and ſweeten them, and give them a freſh and new Reliſh. For when we are weary of *Reſt*, we are fain to recreate our ſelves with *Action*; and when we are weary of *Action*, to refreſh ourſelves with *Reſt*; and ſo round again in the ſame Circle. Thus the greateſt part of the Pleaſure of *Eating* and *Drinking* conſiſts in aſſwaging the pain of our *Hunger* and *Thirſt*. For when *this* is over, you ſee the Pleaſure ceaſes; and till it returns again, every freſh Morſel is but a new load to a tired Digeſtion. So that, in ſhort, the greateſt part of thoſe *ſenſual Felicities* which we do here enjoy, are only ſhort intermiſſions of the *Pains* and *Uneaſineſſes* of a wretched Life. But if there were no other *Happineſs* belonging to a Man, but what conſiſts in not being ſenſible of *Miſery*, it were much more deſirable to be a *Stone* than a *Man*; and the only way for him to be perfectly Happy, would be to deprive himſelf of all *Senſe* and *Perception*.

'Tis true, That which is *poſitive* in our Happineſs can never be perfectly enjoyed by us, without a perfect *Indolence* and *Inſenſibility* of *Pain*; it being impoſſible for us to have a *perfect Senſe* of any thing, whilſt we have the leaſt touch or feeling of its *Contrary*. But were *Happineſs* nothing elſe but a *nonperception* of *Miſery*, it would have no *poſitive* Eſſence of Reality of its own, which is directly contrary to all humane Experience. For we plainly feel, that our *Happineſs* hath in it, not only a *Reſt* from *Evil*, but a *grateful Motion to Good*: and that as our *Pain* and *Miſery* conſiſt in an *acute* and *ſenſible Perception* of ſuch Things as are moſt ungrateful to our Natures; ſo *Pleaſure* and *Satisfaction* conſiſt in a *vigorous Perception* of the contrary. So that beſides *the not being miſerable*, (which is not ſo properly an *Eſſential Part* of Happineſs, as a neceſſary *Diſpoſition* to it, without which the Faculties of our Natures will be indiſpoſed to reliſh and perceive it) there is a *poſitive Happineſs*, which (as I ſaid before) conſiſts in a *conſtant*, *free* and *vigorous Exerciſe* of the Faculties about ſuch Objects as are moſt convenient and ſuitable to their Natures. For *Happineſs* in the general includes *Perfection* and *Pleaſure*, both which are neceſſarily included in *ſuch* an Exerciſe of the Faculties. For *then* the Faculties are *Perfect*, *when* they are *freely*, *conſtantly* and *vigorouſly* employed about ſuch Objects as are moſt congruous to their ſeveral Natures; when they are recovered from all *Indiſpoſitions*, whether *natural* or *moral*, to thoſe proper Motions and Exerciſes for which they were framed; and do freely, conſtantly, and without any Clog or Interruption direct all their Courſes towards ſuch Objects as are their natural Centers. And *then* the Faculties are moſt *pleas'd* and *delighted* too, *when* they are moſt vigorouſly exerciſed about that which is moſt ſuitable to them; when they are not only determined to ſuch Objects as are moſt agreeable to their Natures, but do alſo act upon and exert themſelves towards them with the greateſt *Sprightlineſs* and *Vigour*.

These Things I thought meet to premise concerning *Happiness* in the *general*, as being very needful to the clearer Resolution of the present Enquiry, *viz.* Wherein consists the *Heaven* or *Happiness* of a *Man?* In short therefore, the proper *Heaven* and *Happiness* of a *Man*, considered as a *rational Being*, consists in the *constant*, *free*, and *sprightful* Exercise of his Faculties, about such Objects as are most convenient to his *rational Nature*; which consisting wholly of *Understanding*, and *Will*, that is, of a Faculty of *Knowing*, and a Faculty of *Choosing*, the most suitable Objects of it are such as are most worthy to be *known*, and most worthy to be *chosen*. When therefore the *Understanding* is always *vigorously* exercised in seeing and contemplating the most glorious and excellent *Truths*, and the *Will* is always *vigorously* employed in choosing and embracing the most desirable *Goods*, then is the whole rational Nature *Happy*. Now if you cast abroad your Thoughts over the whole extent of *Being*, you will presently find that there is nothing in it so worthy to be *known* and *chosen* as *God*; whose Power being the Source and Fountain of all *Truth*, that is, of all that either *is* or is *possible*, and whose Nature being the Subject of all *rational Perfection*, wherein it originally resides, and from whence 'tis derived to all the rational Creation; you must upon these accounts necessarily allow *Him* to be infinitely the most worthy Object in all the World of *Beings*, for our *Understanding* to *contemplate*, and our *Will* to *choose*. And if so, then the very Life and Quintessence of the *Heaven* of a *Man*, considered as a *reasonable Being*, must needs consist in a close and intimate *Knowledge* of God, and a free and uncontroverted *Choice* of him.

But that we may more fully comprehend the Nature of this *Happiness*, it will be needful that we should more distinctly explain what these two Essential *Acts* of it do import, and what *Happiness* is included in them. And,

I. The *Happiness* of a *Man* consists in a free and intimate *Knowledge* of God. For our *Understanding* hath naturally as strong an Appetite to *Truth*, as our *Stomach* hath to *Food*, and as grateful a Relish of it, when it hath once discover'd it, as an *hungry Man* hath of a *pleasant Morsel*. And tho in this Life its *Appetite* is many times *pall'd* and *deadned*, partly thro' the *Difficulty* of *knowing*, occasion'd either by the natural *Indispositions* of its Organs, or the inveterate *Prejudices* of a bad Education; and partly by being continually employed in *secular Cares* and *Pursuits*, which do perpetually *divert*, and so by degrees *wean* it from its natural Inclination to *Truth*: Yet when we go from this World, and leave these Causes behind us, which give such a check to its *Appetite*, doubtless its hunger after *Knowledge* will immediately revive, and there will be no possibility of ever satisfying it without *it*.

Suppose we then the future World to be inhabited with a Company of *Intellectual Beings*, that do all most *vehemently gasp* after the *Knowledge* of *Truth*: What can there be imagined more grateful to them, than to be admitted to the very Fountain of all *Truth* and *Reality*, there to quench their Thirst, and satisfy their infinite Desires, with the *free* and *easy*, but *still fresh* Discoveries of his infinite *Glories* and *Perfections?* Where will they be able to fix their *greedy Eyes* with comparably that Pleasure and Delight, as upon the mysterious *Tri-une Divinity*, which is the eternal *Author* of all *Being*, the *Root* of all *Good*, and the *Rule* and *Source* of all *Perfection?* But then supposing, what is the Case of these *Blessed Contemplators*, that their Minds are so *raised*, and their Apprehensions are rendred so *unspeakably quick* and *sagacious*, as that they can *All* know whatsoever they have a mind to, without the *difficulty* of *Study*; and presently discern the Dependance and Connexion of Things, without any *puzzling Discourse*, or *laborious Deduction*: With what incomparable Satisfaction must they needs peruse that infinite *Volume* of the Divine *Being* and *Perfections?*

Now that in that *blessed State* they have unspeakably *clearer* and more *perspicuous* Apprehensions of Things than ever they had *here*, that *noble* Passage of St. *Paul* assures us, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 12. *For now we see thro' a glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even also as I am known:*

that

that is, now our *Knowledge* of Divine Things is very *obscure* and *imperfect*, they being shewn us, as it were, thro' a Glass, on purpose to give us but a *glimpse* of them; but when we come to *Heaven*, we shall *look close* upon them, and have a far *clearer*, and more *distinct* Apprehension of them. Then we shall *know* God as truly as He *knows* us, and have as *real* and *certain* Apprehensions of his *All-glorious Being*, as He hath of ours. So that in *Heaven*, you see, the *Eyes* of those *Blessed Minds*, that inhabit it, are so *invigorated*, that they can gaze upon the Sun without *dazzling*; contemplate the pure and immaculate Glories of the Deity, without being *confounded* with their *Brightness*: and their Understanding being thus *exalted*, they must needs apprehend more at *one single view*, than we can do in *Volumes* of Discourse, and *tedious long Trains* of Deduction.

And then enjoying, as they do, a most *perfect Repose*, both from *within* and *without* them, they are never *disturbed* in their *eager Contemplations*; which having such a vast *Horizon* of *Truth* and *Glory* round about them, are still discovering farther and farther, and so *continually* entertain'd with fresh *Wonders* and *Delights*. What an infinite deal of Pleasure then must that *All-glorious Object* afford to such *raised* and *elevated* Minds, which, like *transparent Windows* let in, without any Labour or Difficulty, all that *Divine* and *Heavenly Light*, which freely offers itself unto, and shines for ever round about them; and which, by every *new* Discovery of God, and of these *bottomless Secrets* and *Mysteries* of his Nature, are still enlarged to discover *more*, and still have *new* Discoveries offering themselves, as fast as they are enlarged to receive them. This, of *itself*, is so great a Part of Heaven, that St. *John* himself seems to be at a loss how to imagine any Heaven *beyond* it; 1 *John* iii. 2. *Beloved, now we are the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that when He shall appear, we shall be like him*, that is, in Glory and Happiness, *for we shall see him as he is*. But then,

II. The *Heaven* or *Happiness* of a *Man* consists also in a free and undistracted *choice* of God; that is, in *choosing* him for the Rule and Pattern of our *Natures*, and for the Object of our *Love*, *Adoration* and *Dependance*; all which (as I shall shew hereafter) are *Beatifical Acts*, and do abundantly contribute to the *Happiness* of *Reasonable Creatures*. For *Happiness* (as hath been premised) consists not in *Rest*, but in *Motion*; and there is no *Motion* can contribute to the *Happiness* of any Being, but what is suitable to its own Nature. Now, what *Motion* can be more suitable to the Nature of a *Reasonable Creature*, than to love and adore the Author of its *Being* and *Well-being*; to bow to the *Will* of the *Almighty Sovereign*; and to imitate the *Perfections* of the *supreme Standard* and *Pattern* of all *Reasonable Beings*; to rely and depend on his *infinite Power*, that is always conducted by his *infinite Wisdom* and *Goodness*? all which are founded upon so many strong, evident and undeniable *Reasons*, that the very naming of them is sufficient to justify them to our Faculties, and demonstrate them to be infinitely agreeable to the most *fundamental Principles* of our *Reasonable Nature*. And being so, it is impossible but that of themselves they should be exceeding *joyous* and *blissful*: For as the *Sensitive* Nature is most gratified with those Acts that have most of *Sense* in them, so is the *Rational* with those that have most of *Reason* in them. And certainly those have most *Reason* in them, which are terminated upon Objects which most *deserve* them; and what Objects can so well *deserve* to be acted upon by *Reasonable Beings*, as God? Or what *Acts* can they so reasonably exert upon him, as those of *Love* and *Adoration*, *Homage* and *Imitation*, *Trust* and *Dependance*? But as no *Acts* of *Sense* can be very grateful to our *Sensitive Nature*, so long as we exert them either with *Repugnance*, or *Indifferency*, so neither can any Acts of *Reason* be to our *Rational*; the Pleasure of all Acts, whether *Sensitive* or *Rational*, consisting (as I shew'd before) in the *Sprightfulness* and *Vigour* of them. And this is the Cause why Men *now* find so little Felicity in these most *Rational* Acts of *Godliness*, because by their own *bad Customs* they have rendered them-

ſelves *averſe*, or at leaſt very *cold* and *indifferent* to them; which neceſſarily renders us *dead* and *liſtleſs* in the Exerciſe of them; and conſequently cauſes them to go off with *little guſt*, if not with an *ungrateful reliſh*. But even in this *imperfect State*, we find by Experience, that the more our *corrupted Nature* diſcharges and diſburdens itſelf of thoſe *vicious Indiſpoſitions*, which do ſo *cramp* and *arreſt* it in theſe its *heavenly Operations*, the more it is *pleaſed* ſtill and *delighted* in them: Yea, and that when it is ſo far inured to a *Godly Life*, as to be able to practiſe the ſeveral *Virtues* of it, but with the ſame degree of *Activity* and *Vigour*, as 'twas wont to do its moſt *beloved Luſts*, it is unſpeakably more *pleaſed* and *ſatisfied*; and finds more *Sweetneſs* by a thouſand Degrees, in its *Love* and *Adoration*, *Obedience* and *Imitation of God*, than ever it did in the higheſt Reliſhes of *Epicuriſm* and *Senſuality*; that the more perfectly we *Love* and *Adore*, &c. the more of *Heaven* we taſte in theſe *Bleſſed Acts*; and that, when by a *long* and *conſtant* Practice of them, we have once render'd them *natural* to us, we enjoy ſuch an *Heaven upon Earth*, in the *eaſy*, *free* and *vigorous Exerciſe* of them, as we would not exchange for all the Pleaſures and Felicities which the World can afford us. And yet, God knows, the moſt perfect State of *Godlineſs* which we attain to *here*, hath ſo many Degrees of *Imperfection* in it, and in this we are ſo diſturbed and interrupted by *bodily Indiſpoſitions*, and the *Troubles* and *Neceſſities* of this preſent Life, that from the *Joy* and *Pleaſure* which reſults from it here, we can hardly *gueſs* at thoſe *raviſhing Felicities* which will ſpring out of it *hereafter*: When we ſhall be perfectly releaſed from all the Encumbrances of *Fleſh* and *Blood*, and *Sin*; when we ſhall be tranſlated into a *free* and *quiet State*, wherein we ſhall have nothing elſe to do, but only to *know* and *love*, *obey* and *imitate*, and have no *Imperfection* either *natural* or *vicious*, to clog or diſturb us in this our *Beatifical Employment*: Wherein we ſhall act with all our *Vigour* and *Might*, and thruſt forth the whole *Strength* of our Souls in every *Love*, and every *Obedience*; ſo that every *Motion* of our *Souls* towards God, ſhall have the *Vehemence* of a Rapture in it, without the *Violence*: When, I ſay, we ſhall be *eternally* fixed in a State of ſuch perfect *Freedom* and *Activity*, our *Happineſs* muſt needs be as large as our *Deſires*, and as great as our utmoſt *Capacity* or *Power* of *acting upon God*. For now we ſhall *imitate* the moſt *Perfect*, and *adore* the moſt *Adorable*, as much as *ever* we are *able*; that is, we ſhall perform with all our *Might* and *Vigour* the Acts that are moſt agreeable to our *Reaſonable Nature*: And in the utmoſt *Vigour* of ſuch *Acts* (as I have already ſhewed) conſiſts our utmoſt *Happineſs*.

Suppoſe we then a Society of *Rational Beings* placed in ſuch a State, wherein they have an Object of *infinite Perfections* always before them, and no Evil from *without* or *within* to check or divert them from exerting *all their Powers* upon him in the moſt *reaſonable Actions*: Suppoſe them now to be moving with *unſpeakable Vigour* and *Agility*, like ſo many *ever-living Orbs* about this their *everlaſting Center*; to be as full of *Love* and *Duty* to him as ever their *Hearts* can hold; to be *copying* his *Perfections*, and *adoring* his *Excellencies* with an uncontroulable *Freedom* and *Alacrity*, and breathing forth themſelves to him in *chearful Praiſes*, and *rapturous Hallelujah's*; in a word, to be exerciſing themſelves about him to their utmoſt *Strength* and *Power*, in all thoſe *bleſſed Offices* which *his* Nature and *their* Relation to him call for: Suppoſe, I ſay, *all this*, and you have before ye that which is the very *Top* and *Flower* of the *Heaven* of a *reaſonable Creature*; who in this *bleſſed State* is fixed, as it were, in his own proper *Element*, where, without any *Lett* or *Diſturbance*, he freely *moves* and *acts* according to his moſt *natural Tendence* and *Inclination*.

And now, by this time, I think it is clear enough, that the *main* and *principal Part* of the *Heaven* of a *Man*, conſidered as a *reaſonable Creature*, conſiſts in *Knowing* and *Chooſing* of God. But beſides *this*, there are other bleſſed *Ingredients* of Heaven; the *Principal* whereof is, the knowing and chooſing *thoſe* that are *moſt like* unto God; namely, the *bleſſed Jeſus* in his *human Nature*,

ture, and the *Holy Angels* and *Saints*, who are *all* in their ſeveral Meaſures and Degrees, the expreſs and lively *Images* of God. And therefore if to know and chooſe God be the *ſupreme* Felicity of Heaven, then doubtleſs the *next* to *that*, is, to *know* and be *acquainted* with theſe bleſſed *Images* of him, and freely to *chooſe* their *Company* and *Converſation*, and be entirely *united* to them in *Affection*; without which, it would be no Felicity to dwell in the *ſame Place* with them. For to *cohabit* with Jeſus, and with Saints and Angels, and not be *acquainted with* and *united* to them in *Heart* and *Affection*, would be rather a *Burden* than a *Pleaſure*. The Happineſs therefore of being in their *Society*, conſiſts in *knowing* and *chooſing* them. And this is every where implied, where our being in *them* is mention'd as a Part of our Heaven. Thus, 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 17. to *be ever with the Lord*, is the ſame Thing with being *ever in Heaven:* But then, 'tis to be ever with him upon *Choice*; for ſo thoſe Words imply, *Phil.* i. 23. *I deſire to depart and to be with Chriſt*; *which is far better.* And accordingly this is mention'd by the Apoſtle, as a *dear Privilege* of our being Members of the *Chriſtian Church*, whereby we are entituled to the Society of *Holy Myriads of Angels*; *of the general Aſſembly and Church of the Firſt-born*; *of God the Judge of all*; *of the Spirits of Juſt Men made perfect, and of Jeſus the Mediator of the New Covenant*, Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24. And indeed this muſt needs be an *ineſtimable Happineſs*, not only to *cohabit;* but be *acquainted with*, and in Heart and Will *united* to this bleſſed and glorious Company. For what Soul that has any *Spark* of Cordial Love to Jeſus, the *beſt Friend* of *Souls* that ever was, any *grateful Remembrance* of what he *did* and *ſuffer'd* for our ſakes, would not eſteem it a *mighty Felicity* to be admitted into his *Preſence*, and to be an *Eye-witneſs* of the happy Change of his paſt *woful* Circumſtances? To ſee him that was ſo *cruelly treated*, ſo barbarouſly *vilified*, *tortured* and *butchered* for our ſakes, *raiſed* to the higheſt pitch of Splendour and Dignity, to be *Head* and *Prince* of all the *Hierarchy* of Heaven, to be *worſhipped* and *celebrated* thro'out all the noble *Choir* of *Arch-Angels* and *Angels*, and *Spirits of juſt Men made perfect?* Verily methinks had I only the Privilege to *look in* and *ſee* my dear and bleſſed Lord *ſurrounded* with all this *Circle* of Glories, it would be a moſt *heavenly Conſolation* to me, tho I were ſure never to *partake* of it. The very *Communion* I ſhould have in the *Joys* of my *Maſter*, would be a kind of Heaven at *Second-hand* to me, and my Soul would be wondrous Happy by *Sympathizing* with him in his *Felicity* and *Advancement*. But, Oh! when that *Bleſſed Perſon* ſhall not only *permit* me to *ſee* his Glory, but *introduce* me into it, and make me *Partaker* of it; when I ſhall not only *behold his beloved Face*, but be *admitted* into his *dear Converſation*, and *dwell* in his *Arms* and *Embraces* for ever; when I ſhall hear him record the *wondrous Adventures* of his Love, thro' how many *woful Stages* he paſs'd to reſcue me from *Miſery*, and make me *Happy*, and in the mean time ſhall have a moſt *raviſhing Feeling* of *that* Happineſs; how will my Heart *ſpring* with *Joy*, and *burn* with *Love*, and my Mouth *o'erflow* with *Praiſes* and *Thankſgiving* to him!

And as our Acquaintance with, and Choice of the *Bleſſed Jeſus* muſt needs contribute vaſtly to our Happineſs; ſo muſt alſo (tho not in ſo *high* a Degree) our being *intimately acquainted* and *united* with *Saints* and *Angels*; who being not only endowed with large and comprehenſive *Underſtandings*, but alſo with perfect *good Nature*, and moſt generous *Charity*, muſt needs make *excellent Company*. For as their *Goodneſs* cannot but render their Converſation infinitely *free* and *benign*, ſo their great *Knowledge* muſt neceſſarily render it equally *profitable* and *delightful*. And then being ſo *Knowing* as they are, they muſt needs be ſuppoſed to *underſtand* all the *wiſe Arts* of *Endearment*; and being ſo *Good*, they muſt be alſo ſuppoſed to be continually *practiſing* them. And if ſo, what a *heavenly Converſation* muſt theirs be, the *Scope* whereof is the moſt *glorious Knowledge*, and the *Law* whereof is the moſt *perfect Friendſhip?* Who would not be willing to leave a *fooliſh*, *froward*, and *ill-natur'd* World,

for the blessed Society of these *wise Friends*, and *perfect Lovers*? And what a Felicity must it be, to spend an Eternity in such a *noble* Conversation! where we shall hear the *deep Philosophy* of Heaven communicated with *mutual Freedom* in the wise and amicable Discourses of *Angels* and *glorified Spirits*; who without any *Reserve*, or *Affectation of Mystery*, without *Passion* or *Interest*, or *peevish Contention* for *Victory*, do *freely* Philosophize, and *mutually* impart the Treasures of each other's *Knowledge*. For since all *Saints* there are great *Philosophers*, and all *Philosophers* perfect *Saints*, we must needs suppose *Knowledge* and *Goodness*, *Wisdom* and *Charity*, to be equally intermingled thro'out all their Conversation; and being so, what can be imagined more delightful! When therefore we shall leave this *impertinent* and *unsociable* World; and all our *good old Friends* that are gone to Heaven before us, shall meet us as soon as we are landed upon the Shore of Eternity, and with infinite Congratulations for our safe Arrival, shall conduct us into the Company of the *Patriarchs* and *Prophets*, *Apostles* and *Martyrs*, and introduce us into an *intimate* Acquaintance with them, and with all those *brave* and *generous* Souls, who by their glorious Examples have recommended themselves to the World; when we shall be *familiar Friends* with *Angels* and *Arch-Angels*, and all the *Courtiers* of Heaven shall call us *Brethren*, and bid us *Welcome* to their *Master's Joy*, and we shall be received into their glorious Society with all the tender Endearments and Caresses of those *heavenly Lovers*; what a *mighty* Addition to our Happiness will this be!

There are indeed some other Additions to the Happiness of Heaven; such as the *Glory* and *Magnificence* of the *Place*, which is the *highest Heaven*, or the upper and purer Tracts of the *Æther*, which our Saviour calls *Paradise*, *Luke* xxiii. 43. and St. *Paul* the *Third Heaven*, 2 Cor. xii. 2. both which, in the Phrase of that Age, bespeak it to be a Place of *unspeakable Glory*; for so the *Jews* do commonly call this blessed Seat, the *Third* or *Angel-bearing* Region of Heaven, by which they denote it to be the *Place* of the *King* of the whole World, where his most glorious Courtiers do reside; and they also call it *Paradise*, in allusion to the earthly Paradise of *Eden*; because as *that* was the *Garden* of this *lower* World, so *this* is of the *whole Creation*. And tho we have no *exact Description* of this Place in *Scripture*, and that perhaps because no human Language can describe it; yet since God hath chosen it for the *Everlasting Theatre* of Bliss and Happiness, we may thence reasonably conclude, that he hath most *exquisitely furnish'd* it with all Accommodations requisite to a most *happy* and *blissful* Life.

Besides which also, there is the *Everlasting Duration* of it, which is another great Accession to its Happiness. That such is the Nature of its Enjoyments, as that they do not, like all other Pleasures, *spend* and *waste* in the Fruition; that tho it will be always *feeding* our Faculties with new Delights, yet it will never be *exhausted*, but be always *equally*, because *infinitely* distant from a Period. So that its Happiness consisting of an *infinite Variety* of Pleasure extended to an *infinite Duration*, it will be impossible for those that enjoy it to be either *cloy'd* with the Repetition of it, or *tormented* with the Fear of losing it.

But these *Two last* I only mention, because they do not so properly belong to our present Argument; which is only to explain the Nature of *Heaven* so far as is necessary to the right understanding of the Nature of those *Means* by which it is to be attained.

Now from what hath been said concerning this great *End* of the *Christian Life*, these *Two* Things are to be inferr'd concerning the *Nature* of it.

I. That the *main* of Heaven consists not so much in any *outward* Possession, as in an *inward* State and Temper. For tho Heaven be, doubtless, a most *glorious Place*, and all its blessed *Inhabitants* do possess and hold it by an everlasting *Tenure*; yet 'tis a great Mistake to imagine that the main Happiness of Heaven consists in living for ever in a *glorious Place*, which, separated from all the rest of Heaven, would be but a *poor* and *hungry* kind of Happiness.

For *Life* is no otherwise a Happiness, than as it is the Principal of all our *pleasant* and *grateful Perceptions*; and if we could live for ever without *perceiving*, it would be the same Thing to us, as if we were nothing but a Company of everlasting *Stones* and *Trees*; and what great matter would it signify to live for ever in a *glorious Place*, unless we could be for ever affected by it with a *delightful Sense* and *Perception?* which is impossible; because all *delightful Sense* (as hath already been proved) arises out of the *vigorous Exercise* of our Faculties about such Objects as are suitable to them; but what can there be in the most *glorious Place* so suitable to a *Rational Mind* and *Will*, as to keep them for ever *vigorously* employed and exercised about it? It may, indeed, for a while, employ the *Mind* in an eager Contemplation of its *new* and *surprizing* Beauties; but how soon would the Mind dis-relish it, were it to be its *only* Entertainment for Eternity? And as for the *Will*, what would a fine Place signify to it, if it were not replenish'd with such Objects as are suitable to its own *Options?* And indeed, there is nothing that can *everlastingly* gratify a rational Mind and Will, but what has in it such an *Infinity* of *Truth* as is everlastingly *Knowable*, and such an *Infinity* of *Goodness* as is everlastingly *Desirable*; or, which is the same Thing, nothing but what hath *Truth* enough in it for the one to be vigorously *contemplating* for ever; and nothing but what hath *Goodness* enough in it for the other to be as vigorously *loving*, *adoring*, and *imitating* for ever. And such an Infinitude of *Truth* and *Goodness* is no where to be found but in *God*. But *God*, as well as the *Place*, and *Duration* of Heaven, being an Object that is *external* to us, neither is, nor can be a Happiness to us, unless we *act upon* him, and *freely exercise* our Faculties about him; unless we *Know* him, and *Love* him, &c. So that *that* which *felicitates* all, is our own *Internal Act*; 'tis by *this* that we enjoy Heaven, and perceive all the Pleasures of it. 'Tis not by *being in Heaven* that Men are constituted Happy, but by *vigorously exerting* their Faculties upon the heavenly Objects: For without *this*, to be *in* Heaven or *out of it*, would be indifferent to us. The Happiness of Heaven therefore consists in a *State* of *heavenly Action*; in being so *attempered* and *connaturaliz'd* to the Objects of Heaven, as to be always *acting upon*, and *chearfully employing* our Faculties about them. For as there is no Pleasure in Acting *coldly* upon *suitable* Objects, so there is Pain and Trouble in acting *vigorously* upon *unsuitable* ones. And therefore to make *Heaven* itself a *Happiness* to us, 'tis necessary not only that we should act vigorously upon the Objects of it, but that we should *so act* from a *Suitableness* of Temper to them: That we should contemplate God, submit to his Will, adore and imitate his Perfections from a *God-like Temper* and *Disposition*. For otherwise these Acts will be *Penances* instead of *Pleasures* to us; and the more *intensely* we exert them, the more *painful* they will be. And if we were in Heaven, all that heavenly Exercise in which the Happiness of it consists, would be but a *Torment* and *Vexation* to us, unless we had a *heavenly Temper*. For as the Parts of *Matter* can never *rest*, but do move about in a perpetual *Whirl-pool*, till they *hit* into a Place or *Interstice* that is of the same *Form* and *Figure* with them; so there is nothing can *rest* in Heaven but what is *Heavenly*. All that is otherwise *rebounds* and *flies off* of its own accord, and can never *acquiesce* there, till 'tis of the same Form, and Temper, and Disposition with it. From hence therefore it's evident, that the Happiness of a Man in *Heaven* consists not so much in the *outward* Glory of the Place, as in the *inward* State of his own Mind, which, from a *Suitableness* of Temper to the heavenly Objects, doth always *freely* employ and exercise its Faculties about them.

II. That the *heavenly State* is nothing else but the *Perfection* of all *heavenly Virtue*. For it hath been already proved, That Heaven consists in a clear and intimate *Knowledge*, and a free and uncontested *Choice* of God, and of those Blessed Beings that resemble him; and *these Two* comprehend *all*

heavenly Virtue. So that the Difference between the State of *Grace* and *Glory* is not in *Kind*, but in *Degree*: For Grace is the *Seed* of Glory, and Glory is the *Maturity* of Grace. 'Tis *Knowledge* exalted above all *Error* and *Prejudice*, above all *Difficulty* or *Obscurity* of Apprehension; 'tis *Love* strained from all *Repugnancies* of Flesh and Spirit, and refined into a pure *Celestial Flame*; 'tis *Obedience* to, and *Imitation* of God, perfectly separated from all *sinful* Defects, and freed from the *Clog* of *counter-striving* Principles; 'tis *Adoration* of, and *Dependency* upon him, without the least degree of *Indisposition* or *Despondency*; in a word, 'tis a *free* and *uncontrouled* Motion of all the heavenly Virtues together, in which they are every one most *vigorously* exerted, without the least *Check* or *Impediment*. This therefore being the *State* of *Heaven*, as is evident from what hath been discoursed, it hence follows, that the main Difference between *Virtue* and *Heaven*, is only *gradual*; that Virtue is the *Beginning* of Heaven, and Heaven is the *Perfection* of Virtue. And if so, then as the *lowest* Degree of true Virtue is a *step* Heaven-wards, so every *farther* Degree is a *nearer Approach* towards the heavenly State. So that as we *grow* in Grace, and proceed from *one* Degree of Virtue to *another*, we draw *nearer* and *nearer* to that blessed Condition in which we shall be all *pure Virtue*, without any *sinful* Alloy or Intermixture. And this is the true *State* and *Condition* of Heaven.

CHAP. II.

Concerning the Means *by which this Great* End *of the* Christian Life *is to be attained.*

IT is to be consider'd, That the great Design of Christianity being to *advance* our Natures to such a sublime Degree of Purity and Perfection, as is requisite to capacitate us for the Enjoyment of a *heavenly Bliss*, it was necessitated, in order hereunto, to strain our Duty to a greater *height* than any *preceding* Law had done before it. For the *End* of all God's *Laws* is the *Happiness* of his *Subjects*; and therefore that they may be effectual *Means* to promote this *End*, it's necessary that the *Duties* they enjoin should be such as the *Nature* of our Happiness requires. Now in the first State of our Nature, which was that of *Innocence*; we seem to have been design'd only for a *Terrestrial Paradise*, that is, to enjoy the Pleasures of a pure Mind inhabiting a sensitive and animal Body; and therefore had we stood, (which God foresaw we should not, and therefore design'd us for a more raised and heavenly Condition) our Happiness would have been what it is now in this World, tho in a higher Degree, *viz.* a Compound of spiritual and bodily Delights, to be enjoy'd in a State of earthly Immortality, which would have been of a much inferior Nature to that pure State of spiritual Happiness whereunto we are now designed and directed: And to serve this former End, in the Possession of which Man was placed in the State of *Innocence*, God gave him the *Law* of *Nature*, which seems to have been nothing else but only *Right Reason* dictating to us what is necessary to be done, in order to this our *earthly Happiness*. And accordingly the Duties of this Law were of a much *lower* Strain than the Duties of Christianity; they being intended for the Means and Instruments of a much *lower* Happiness. For in this our *Earthly* and *Animal* State, right Reason could require nothing of us but what was subservient to our *Earthly* and *Animal* Felicity; which was only a mixture of bodily and mental, sensitive and rational Pleasure; and nothing could be *good* for us but what tended thereunto, no-

thing

thing *evil* but what did obstruct and oppose it. But now that our Happiness is placed in *another* World, and in such *vastly different* Enjoyments from those of a Terrestrial Paradise, we must proceed upon *other* Principles: For now every Action is Good or Bad, Wise or Foolish, as it *serves* or *hinders* our Happiness in the World to come. And therefore it is highly reasonable that now we should live at a *different rate* than what we were obliged to in that *Animal* State wherein we were first created; that we should submit our *earthly* to our *heavenly* Interest, and renounce the Joys and Pleasures of *this* Life, whensoever they stand in Competition with the *spiritual* Felicities of the *Life to come*. *Now* we are no longer to look upon this World as our *Native Country*, but as a *Foreign Land*; and so we are to reckon ourselves *Strangers* and *Pilgrims* upon Earth; and accordingly to use the Conveniences of this Life as *Strangers* do their *Inns*, not to abide or take up our Habitation in them, but only to bait and away, and refresh our selves, that so we may be the better enabled to perform our Journey to the Eternal World. For the Scene of our *Happiness* being shifted from an earthly Immortality, to an Heavenly; and consequently the Happiness itself being now much more *sublime* and *pure* and *spiritual* than it would have been, had it continued Earthly; it's necessary that our Nature should be *exalted* with it, and that we should be *raised* as high above the *Condition* of mere earthly Creatures, as *that* is above the *Rank* and *Quality* of an earthly Happiness; otherwise it will be impossible for us to relish and enjoy it.

Now every Agent hath need of *more* or *fewer* Means proportionably as he is *farther off*, or *nearer* to the End he drives at. As for Instance, the Husbandman that hath a *fat* and *fruitful* Soil to sow his Seed in, is nearer to the attaining of a good Harvest, than he that hath a *barren* or *stony* Ground to work upon; and therefore hath much *less* to do. For whereas the latter, before he can plough and sow, must manure his Ground, and gather out the Stones of it; the former needs only plough up the fertile Earth, and cast his Seed into it. Or to come closer to the Case in hand; a Man that is merely *ignorant* is in a much *nearer* Capacity of true Knowledge, than he whose Mind is altogether prejudiced with *erroneous* Principles; and therefore needs much *fewer* Helps and Means to attain it: For *his* Mind being perfectly disengaged, is like a fair *Paper*, on which as there is nothing *writ*, so there is nothing to be *blotted out*; so that all that he hath to do, is to enquire after and receive the Truth when it is fairly proposed to him. But as for the *Prejudiced* Man, he hath a great deal to unlearn, before he can be capable of Learning; a great many *false* Principles to be expunged, before ever the *true* Notions of Things can be imprinted on his Understanding.

If therefore we would take a true Account of all those *Means* that are necessary to our attaining of Heaven, we must consider what a *vast Distance* we are from it in this corrupt and degenerate State of our Nature. If we were in a State of *Indifference* between Virtue and Vice, we should be much *nearer* Heaven than we are: For then, as we should be without those *heavenly Virtues*, in the free Exercise whereof the State of Heaven consists; so we should be without all that *Repugnance* and *Aversation* to them which renders them so difficultly attainable; and our Nature being already in an *Æquilibrium*, would by the least *over-weight* of Motion be presently inclined to Virtue and Goodness. But, alas! in this *corrupt* State whereinto we are sunk, our Nature runs Evil-wards with a very strong and prevailing *Biass*; and is not only *void* of Virtue, but *averse* to it: And this sets us at a far greater Distance from the blessed *End* of our Religion, than otherwise we should be: For every degree of vicious Inclination that is in us, is a *Remove* from Heaven, a *Descent* from that Perfection of Virtue wherein the heavenly Blessedness consists. And if so, how *remote* from Heaven are the Generality of Men in the beginning of their Progress thither; when to their natural *Corruption* they have super-added by their sinful Courses so many inordi-

nate *Inclinations*, and inveterate, sinful *Habits*; when by a long Series of wicked Actions, they have raised and blown up their Concupiscence into such raging *Flames* of Lust as generally they do! And being thus far gone back from our *End*, there are sundry *Means*, which otherwise would have been perfectly *needless* and *superfluous*, that are now become absolutely *necessary* thereunto. For had we begun our *Progress* towards Heaven from a State of *Indifferency* between Virtue and Vice, we had had no more to do but to practise those several Virtues of Religion, of which the heavenly Life and State consists; to *love* and to *contemplate*, to *adore* and to *obey* God, and behave ourselves *justly* and *charitably* towards one another; all which would have been so *easy*, that we should have had no occasion of any *Instrumental Duties* to facilitate them to us. Whereas now starting Heaven-wards, as we generally do, from a most *corrupt* and *degenerate* State, there are sundry *other* Means which we must use as *Instruments* that are necessary to our acquiring and persevering in the Virtues of the heavenly Life; to our conquering the Difficulties, and killing the vicious Aversations of our Natures against them: All which would have been *needless*, at least in a great measure, had not our Nature been so *depraved* and *corrupt* as it is.

So that as the Case *now* stands with us, there are *Two* sorts of Means that are necessary to our obtaining of Heaven; The First is, the Practice of those *heavenly Virtues*, in the Perfection whereof consists the State of Heaven; the Second is, the Practice of certain *Instrumental Duties*, which are necessary to our acquiring those heavenly Virtues, and overcoming the Difficulties of them. The first sort of these are the *proximate* Means, those which directly and immediately respect the great and ultimate End; the Second, the more *remote* Means, which immediately respect those Means that immediately respect the *End*. The First is like the Art of the *Builder*, which immediately respects the House; the Second, like the Art of the *Smith*, which immediately respects the *Means* and *Instruments* of Building.

I. One sort of Means necessary to the obtaining of Heaven, and that which more *directly* and *immediately* respects it, is the *Practice* of those *Virtues* in the Perfection whereof the heavenly Life consists: For we find by Experience, that all heavenly Virtues are to be acquired and perfected only by *Practice*; That as all *bad* Dispositions are acquired and improved into Habits by *bad* Practices and Customs, so are all the contrary *virtuous* ones by the *contrary* Practices. For *Religion* proceeds in the Methods of *Nature*, and carries us on from the *Acts* to the *Dispositions*, and from the *Dispositions* to the *Habits* of Virtue. And by the same Method the *Divine Grace* which accompanies Religion, does ordinarily work its Effects upon the Spirits of Men, not by an *instantaneous Infusion* of virtuous Habits into the Will, but by persuading them to the *Practice* of those *Virtues* that are contrary to their *vicious Habits*, and to persist in the Practice of them till they have mortified *those* Habits, and thorowly habituated and inured themselves to *these*. So that the Grace of God is like a *Graff*, which tho it is put into a *Stock* which is quite of *another* kind, doth yet make use of the Faculties and Juices of the Stock, and so by co-operating with them, converts it by degrees into its *own* Nature. And this is exactly agreeable to the common Experience of Men, who, in the Beginning of their Reformation, are so far from acting virtuously from *Habit* and *Inclination*, that it goes against the very *Grain* of their Nature, and they would much rather return to their vicious Courses, if they were not chased and pursued by the *Terrors* of an *awakened Conscience*; and when afterwards they come to act upon a more *ingenuous* Principle, yet still they find in themselves a great *Averseness* and *Reluctancy* to it, and 'tis a great while usually ere they arrive to a *Habit* or *Facility* of acting *virtuously*. But then by *Perseverance* in the Practice of Virtue, they are more and more *inclined* and *disposed* to it, and so by degrees it becomes *easy* and *natural* to them. If therefore we would ever arrive to that Perfection of Virtue which

the Heavenly State implies, it must be by the *Practice* of Virtue, by a continual *training* and *exercising* ourselves in all the Parts of the Heavenly Life, which, by degrees, will *wear off* the *Difficulty* of it, and *adapt* and *familiarize* our Nature to it. Ἃ γὰρ δεῖ μανθάνοντας ποιεῖν, ταῦτα ποιοῦντες μανθάνομεν. *Those Things which they that learn ought to do, they learn by doing them.* Thus we learn Devotion by Prayer, Submission to God by Denying ourselves, Charity by giving Alms, and Meekness by Forgiving Injuries. And we may as reasonably expect to commence *Learned* without *Study*, as *Virtuous* without the *Practice* of Virtue. Since therefore the Formal Happiness of our Reasonable Natures consists in the Perfection of all the Heavenly Virtues, and 'tis by these alone that we can relish and enjoy the blissful Objects of Heaven; it hence follows, that the *Practice* of those Virtues is the most *direct* and *immediate* Means to obtain the *Blessed End* of our Religion. But then,

II. Another sort of Means necessary to our obtaining of Heaven, consists of certain *Instrumental Duties*, by which we are to *acquire*, *improve*, and *perfect* these *Heavenly Virtues*. What these *Means* are, will be hereafter largely shown: All that I shall say of them at present, is, That they are such as are no farther good and useful, than as they are the *Means* of Heavenly Virtue, and do tend towards the *acquiring*, *improving*, and *perfecting* it. For the whole Duty of Man may be distributed into these *Two Generals*, *viz.* The Religion of the *End*, and the Religion of the *Means*. The Religion of the *End*, contains all that *Heavenly Virtue* wherein the *Perfection* and *Happiness* of Human Nature consists; and this the Apostle distributes into Three Particulars, *viz. Sobriety*, *Righteousness*, and *Godliness*. The Religion of the *Means* comprehends all that *Duty* which does either *naturally*, or by *Institution*, respect and drive at this Religion of the *End*; and that all other Duty, that is not itself a Natural Branch and Part of it, doth respect and drive at it, the *Apostle* assures us, when he tells us, that the *Gospel*, or *Grace of God*, was revealed from Heaven for this very Purpose, to teach us to *deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously and godly in this present World.* And if we do not use the Religion of the *Means* to this purpose, it is altogether *useless* and *insignificant*. For the Purpose of all *Religious Duties*, is either,

1. To *reconcile* Men to God, and God to them; or,
2. To *perfect* the Human Nature; or,
3. To *intitle* Men to Heaven; or,
4. To *qualify* and *dispose* them for the Heavenly Life. To neither of which the Religion of the *Means* is any farther useful, than as it produces and promotes in us those *Heavenly Virtues* which are implied in the Religion of the *End*. For,

I. It is no farther useful towards the *reconciling* Us to God, and God to us. For there can be no hearty *Reconciliation* between adverse Parties, without there be a mutual *Likeness*, and *Agreement* of Natures. Now the *Carnal Mind*, (which includes all that is repugnant to the *Heavenly Virtues*) the *Apostle* tells us, is *Enmity against God*, Rom. viii. 7. that is, hath a natural *Antipathy* to the *Purity* and *Goodness* of the Divine Nature. And this *Antipathy*, the same *Apostle* tells us, is founded in our *wicked Works*, Colos. i. 21. So that tho we should practise never so diligently all that is contained in the Religion of the *Means*, tho we should *pray*, and *hear*, and *receive Sacraments*, &c. with never so much Zeal and Constancy; yet all this will be insignificant, as to the *reconciling* our Natures to God, unless it destroy in us that *Carnal Mind* and those *wicked Works* which render us so averse to his *Goodness*. And tho God bears a *hearty Good-will* to all that are capable of *Good*, and *embraces* his whole Creation with the out-stretched Arms of his *Benevolence*; yet he cannot be supposed to be *pleased* with, or *delighted* in any but such as *resemble* Him in those amiable Graces of *Purity* and *Goodness* for which he loves *Himself*. For he loves not *Himself* merely because he is *Himself* (which

would be a *blind Instinct* rather than a *Reasonable Love)* but because he is *Good*: and he loves Himself above all *other* Things, because he knows Himself to be the *Highest* and most *Perfect* Good: and consequently He loves all other Things proportionably as they *approach* and *resemble* Him in Goodness. And indeed, if He loved *Us* for any other Reason besides that for which he loves *Himself*, he would not have *infinite Reason* to love *Himself*; because he would not have *that* Reason to love *Himself*, for which he loves and takes delight in *Us*. Since therefore there is nothing but our *Resemblance* of God can *reconcile* Him to Us; and since our *Resemblance* of Him consists in *Virtue* and true *Goodness*, it hence follows, that all the Religion of the *Means* is insignificant to our *Reconciliation* with God, if it doth not render us truly *Virtuous*. So that till this is effected, there is so vast a *Gulph* between *God* and Us, that neither *We* can go to *Him*, nor *He* come to *Us*; and unless he alter his Nature by becoming *impure* as we are *impure*, or we alter ours by becoming *pure* as He is *pure*, there will be so immense a *Distance* between Him and Us, as that it is impossible we should ever *meet* and *agree*. So that what the *Prophet* saith of *Sacrifice*, may be truly affirm'd of all Religion of the *Means*, *Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of Rams, or with ten thousands of Rivers of Oil?* Will he be reconciled upon our bare *Believing*, *Praying*, or *Receiving Sacraments?* &c. No, no; *He hath shewed thee, O Man, what is good: And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* Micah vi. 7, 8.

II. This Religion of the *Means* is of no farther use as to the *perfecting* our Natures, than as it is instrumental to produce and promote in us those *Heavenly Virtues* which are implied in the Religion of the *End*. For doubtless, to be a perfect Man, is to live up to the highest Principle of Human Nature, which is *Reason*; and till we are once released from the Slavery of *Sense* and *Passion*, and all our Powers of Action are so subdued to this *superior* Principle as to be wholly *regulated* by it, and we *choose* and *refuse*, and *love* and *hate*, and *hope* and *fear*, and *desire* and *delight*, according as right Reason directs, we are in a *maimed* and *imperfect* Condition. Now what else is *Virtue*, but a Habit of Living according to the *Laws* of *Reason*, or of demeaning ourselves towards God, ourselves, and all the World, as best becomes *Rational Beings* placed in our Condition and Circumstances? And till we are in some measure arrived to this, our Nature is so far from being *perfect*, that it is the most *wretched* and *confused* Thing in the whole World; a mere undistinguish'd *Chaos*, where *Frigida cum Calidis*, Sense and Reason, Brute and Man, are shuffled together without any order, like a confounded Heap of Ruins. And therefore as for this Religion of the *Means*, it will be altogether insignificant to the *Perfection* of our Natures, unless by the Practice of it we do acquire a Habit of Acting according to the *Law* of our *Reason*, which *Habit* includes all *Heavenly Virtue*. For constantly to *know* and *do* what is best and most reasonable, is the very Crown and Perfection of every *reasonable Nature*; and therefore so far as our *Faith* and *Consideration*, our *Sorrow* for *Sin*, and the other *Instrumentals* of Religion, promote this *Heavenly Habit* in us, so far are they *perfective* of our Nature, and no *farther*.

III. This Religion of the *Means* is of no farther use to Us, as to the *Entitling* us to Heaven, than as it is productive of those *Heavenly Virtues* which the Religion of the *End* implies. For our Title to Heaven depending wholly upon God's *Promise*, must immediately result from our Performance of those *Conditions* upon which he hath *promised* it; which till we have done, we can have no more *Claim* or *Title* to it than if he had never *promised* it at all. But the sole Condition upon which he hath *promised* it, is Universal Righteousness and Goodness; for so, *without Holiness*, we are assured that *no Man shall see God*; and *Matth.* v. our Saviour intails all the Beatitudes of Heaven upon those Heavenly Virtues of *Purity of Heart*, *Benignity of Temper*, &c. So also, *Rom.* ii. 7. the Promise of Eternal Life is limited to our *patient Continuance in well-doing*.

well-doing. And that we may know before-hand what to trust to, our Saviour plainly tells us, That *not every one that cries, Lord, Lord,* that make Solemn *Prayers* and *Addresses* to me, *shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven:* And, *this is the Will of God*, saith the Apostle, *even our Sanctification*; that is, our being purged from all Impurities of Flesh and Spirit, and inspired with all heavenly Virtues. And the Apostle expresly enumerates those Virtues upon which our Entrance into eternal Life is promised, 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7, 8. *Add to your Faith Virtue, and to Virtue Knowledge, and to Knowledge Temperance, and to Temperance Patience, and to Patience Godliness, and to Godliness Brotherly Kindness, and to Brotherly Kindness Charity; for if these Things be in you, and abound,* saith he, *they make you that you shall neither be barren or unfruitful in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*; that is, That you shall receive the proper *Fruit* of that *Knowledge*, which is eternal Life; for thus, *ver.* 11. he goes on, *For so*, or upon this Condition, *an Entrance shall be ministred unto you abundantly into the Everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* So that unless our Faith purifies our Hearts, and works by Love; unless our Sorrow for Sin works in us Repentance, or a Change of Mind; unless our Prayers raise in us divine and heavenly Affections, that is, unless we so *practise* the *Duties* of the Religion of the *Means*, as thereby to *acquire* the *Virtues* of the Religion of the *End*, it will be all as insignificant to our *Title* to Heaven, as the most *indifferent* Actions in the World.

IV. This Religion of the *Means* is of no farther Use to the *disposing* and *qualifying* us for Heaven, than as it is an effectual Means of the Religion of the *End*; which is a perfectly distinct Consideration from the former: For it would be no Advantage to us to have a *Right* to Heaven, unless we were antecedently *qualified* and *disposed* for it: Because Pleasure, which is a relative Thing, implies a *Correspondence* and *Agreement* between the *Object* and the *Faculty* that tastes and enjoys it. But in the *Temper* of every wicked Mind there is a strong *Antipathy* to the Pleasures of Heaven; which being all *chaste*, and *pure*, and *spiritual*, can never agree with the vitiated Palate of a *base* and *degenerous* Soul. For what Concord can there be between a *spiteful* and *devilish* Spirit, and the Fountain of all *Love* and *Goodness*? between a *sensual* and *carnalized* one, that understands no other Pleasures but only those of the Flesh, and those *Pure* and *Virgin*-Spirits that neither *eat* nor *drink*, but live for ever upon *Wisdom*, and *Holiness*, and *Love*, and *Contemplation*? Certainly, till our Mind is *contempered* to the heavenly State, and we are of the same *Disposition* with God, and Angels, and Saints, there is no Pleasure in Heaven that can be agreeable to us. For, as for the *main*, we shall be of the same *Temper* and *Disposition* when we come into the other World, as we are when we leave *this*; it being unimaginable how a *Total Change* should be wrought in *us* merely by passing out of *one* World into *another*. And therefore as in *this* World it is *Likeness* that does *congregate* and *associate* Beings together, so, doubtless, it is in the *other* too. So that if we carry with us *thither* our *wicked* and *devilish* Dispositions, (as we shall doubtless do, unless we *subdue* and *mortify* them here) there will be no Company fit for us to associate with, but only the *devilish* and *damned* Ghosts of wicked Men, with whom our wretched Spirits being already joined, by a Likeness of Nature, will mingle themselves, as soon as ever they are excommunicated from the Society of Mortals. For whither should they flock, but to the Birds of their own Feather? With whom should they associate, but with those *malignant* Spirits to whom they are already joined by a Community of Nature? So that supposing that when they land in Eternity, it were left to their own Liberty to go to *Heaven* or *Hell*, into the Society of the *Blessed* or the *Damned*, it is plain that Heaven would be no Place for them, that the Air of that *Bright Region* of *Eternal Day* would never agree with their *black* and *hellish* Natures. For, alas! what should they do among those *Blessed Beings* that

that inhabit it, to whose God-like Natures, Divine Contemplations, and heavenly Employments, they have so great a *Repugnancy* and *Aversation*? So that besides the having a *Right* to Heaven, it is necessary to our enjoying it, that we should be antecedently *disposed* and *qualified* for it. And it being thus, God hath been graciously pleased to make those very Virtues the *Conditions* of our *Right* to *Heaven*, which are the proper *Dispositions* and *Qualifications* of our Spirits for it; that so with one and the same Labour we might *entitle* ourselves to, and *qualify* ourselves to enjoy it.

Now (as we shewed you before) the *Condition* of our *Right* to Heaven, is our *practising* those heavenly Virtues which are implied in the Religion of the *End*; and as the Religion of the *Means* no farther *entitles* us to Heaven, than as it produces and promotes in us those heavenly Virtues, so it no farther *qualifies* us for it. For when the Soul goes into Eternity, it leaves the Religion of the *Means* behind it, and carries nothing with it but only those heavenly *Virtues* and *Dispositions* which it here acquired by those *Means*. For as for *Faith* and *Consideration*, *Hearing* of God's *Word*, and *Receiving* of *Sacraments*, &c. they are all but Scaffolds to that heavenly Building of inward *Purity* and *Goodness*; and when this is once finished for Eternity, then must those Scaffolds all go down, as Things of no farther Use or Necessity. But as for the *Graces* of the *Mind*, they are to stand for ever, to be the Receptacles and Habitations of all heavenly Pleasure. And hence the Apostle tells us, that of those Three Christian Graces, Faith, Hope, and Charity, *Charity* (which, in the largest Sense of it, comprehends all heavenly Virtue) is the greatest; because the Two former, being but *Means* of *Charity*, shall cease in Heaven, and be swallowed up for ever in *Vision* and *Enjoyment*; but *Charity*, saith he, *never faileth*, 1 Cor. xii. 13.

By all which, it is apparent, that the Religion of the *Means* is no farther useful to us, than as it is apt to produce and promote in us those heavenly Virtues, the Practice of which is the most *direct* and *immediate* Means to the ultimate *End* of a Christian. Wherefore, as a Man may *knock* and *file*, and yet be no *Mechanick*, tho the *Hammer* and *File* with which he does it are very useful Tools to the making of any curious *Machine*; so a Man may *Pray*, and *Hear*, and *Receive Sacraments*, &c. and yet be a very Bungler in the blessed Trade of a heavenly Life. For tho it is true, these are excellent *Means* of heavenly Living, yet as the Art of the *Mechanick* consists not in *using* his Tools, but in using them in such *a manner* as is necessary to the perfecting and accomplishing his Work: So the Art of one that pretends to the heavenly Life, consists not barely in *praying* and *hearing*, &c. but in using those *Means* with that Religious *Skill* and *Artifice*, which is necessary to render them effectually subservient to the *Ends* of *Piety* and *Virtue*.

And thus I have given a general Account of the *Means* which are necessary to our obtaining of Heaven, and which (as I have shewed) are either such as tend more *directly* and *immediately* to it, or such as more *remotely* respect it. The First is, the Practice of those *heavenly Virtues* in the Perfection whereof the Happiness of Heaven consists; the Second is, the practising of those *Duties* which are necessary to our acquiring and perfecting those *heavenly Virtues*. And of these Two Parts consists the whole *Christian Life*; which takes in not only all those *Virtues* that are to be practised by us in Heaven, but also all those *Duties* by which we are to overcome the Difficulty of those Virtues, and to acquire and perfect them. The First of these, for Distinction sake, we will call the *heavenly Part of the Christian Life*; it being that Part of it which we shall lead in *Heaven*, after we have learn'd it here upon *Earth*; the Second I shall call the *Warfaring*, or *Militant Part of the Christian Life*, which is peculiar to our *earthly State*, wherein we are to contend and strive with the manifold Difficulties which attend us in the Exercise of those *heavenly Virtues*. Both which, I conceive, are implied in these Words of the Apostle, *Phil.* i. 27. *Only let your Conversation be as becometh the Gospel:*

Gospel: where the *Greek* Word πολιτεύεσθε, which we render, *Let your Conversation be*, strictly signifies, *behaving yourselves as Citizens*; or which, if we may have leave to coin a Word, may be fitly render'd, *Citizen it as becometh the Gospel.* For the Word implies, that those of whom he speaks, were *Denizens* of some *Free City*; for so the Word πολίτευμα, which, *Phil.* iii. 20. is render'd *Conversation*, strictly denotes a *Citizenship*, from πολίται, *Citizens*; and is of the same Import with πολιτεία, which, *Acts* xxii. 28. is translated a *Freedom, i. e.* of the City of *Rome*; which denotes the State and Condition of those, who, tho they dwelt *out* of that City, and sometimes *remote* from it, had yet the *Jus Civitatis Romanæ*, the *Privileges* of it belonging to them. For thus *Cicero* describes it, *Omnibus Municipibus duas esse Patrias, unam Naturæ, alteram Juris, Catonis Exemplo, qui Tusculi natus, in Populi Romani Societatem susceptus est: i. e.* "All such as are made Free of the City have Two Countries, one of Nature, the other of Law; as *Cato*, for Instance, who was born at *Tusculum* and afterwards admitted a Citizen of *Rome*." Which exactly agrees with the Nature of this heavenly πολίτευμα, or *Citizenship*, which the Apostle here attributes to *Christians*, who, tho they belong at present to *another Country*, and live a great way off from the *heavenly City*, have as yet no *Domicilium in Urbe*, no actual Possession of any of its blessed Mansions; are notwithstanding *Free Denizens* of it, and have, by Covenant, a Right to all those blessed *Privileges* which its Inhabitants do actually enjoy. From whence it is evident, that the πολιτεύεσθε in that Text, refers to their being *Citizens* of Heaven, and as *such* it earnestly exhorts them to behave themselves; to live as those who being now in a remote Country, are yet συμπολίται τῶν ἁγίων, as the Apostle expresses it, *Eph.* ii. 19. *i. e. Fellow-Citizens with the Saints above*; that are *connaturalized* with them into that heavenly *Commonwealth*. And being thus understood, the Apostle's Advice will comprehend in it *both* those kinds of *Means* which I have before described. For, to live as *Citizens* of Heaven, is, First, To live like those who are the *Inhabitants* of Heaven, to imitate their blessed *Manners* and *Behaviour*, in doing the Will of God upon *Earth*, as it is done by them in *Heaven*; and this takes in the *Practice* of all those *heavenly Virtues* of which the Religion of the *End* consists: Secondly, To live like those that have a πολίτευμα or *Citizenship* in Heaven, that are *intituled* by the Covenant to the *Privileges* and *Immunities* of it, but are as yet to win its *Possession* by a continual *Warfare* and *Contention* with those manifold Difficulties and Oppositions which lie in our way to it: and this takes in the *Practice* of all those *Duties* in which the Religion of the *Means* consists. To live *like Christians* therefore, or, *as becomes the Gospel*, is to live in the continual Use of both kinds of the *Means* of Happiness. So that the *Christian Conversation* consisting of these *Two*, is the only *full* and *adequate* Means by which *Heaven* can be obtained.

But that I may make this more fully appear, I shall consider these *Two* Parts of it *distinctly*, and endeavour to shew how effectually each of them doth contribute in its kind, to our obtaining the Happiness of Heaven. And, First, I shall begin with the *Proximate Means*, viz. The *Practice* of all those *heavenly Virtues* which are implied in the Religion of the *End*, and do make the *heavenly Part of the Christian Life*.

CHAP. III.

Concerning the Heavenly Part *of the* Christian Life, *which is the* Proximate Means *of obtaining Heaven; shewing what* Virtues *it consists of, and how much every* Virtue *contributes to the Happiness of* Heaven.

VIRTUE in the General, consists in a *suitable Behaviour* to the *State* and *Capacities* in which we are placed. Now *Man* who is the Subject of that *Virtue* we are here discoursing of, is to be considered under a Three-fold *Capacity*. The

First, is, Of a *Rational Animal:* The

Second, Of a Rational Animal related to *God:* The

Third, Of a Rational Animal related to all *other Creatures.*

And these are the only Capacities of Virtue that are in Human Nature: So that all the Virtues we are obliged to, and capable of, consist in behaving ourselves suitable to the State and Condition of *Rational Animals*, that are related to *God* and their *Fellow-Creatures.*

By which Three Capacities of our Nature, the Virtue or *Suitableness* of *Behaviour* which we stand obliged to, is distinguished into Three kinds, *viz.*

The *Human*,
The *Divine*, and
The *Social.*

Human Virtue consists in behaving ourselves suitably to the State and Capacity of mere *Rational Animals.*

Divine Virtue consists in behaving ourselves suitably to the Condition of Rational Animals related to *God.*

Social Virtue consists in behaving ourselves suitably to the Capacity of Rational Animals related to their *Fellow-Creatures*, but especially to *Rational Creatures* that are of the same Class and Society with us.

That I may therefore proceed more distinctly in this Argument, I shall endeavour to shew what those *Virtues* of the *Christian Life* are, which are proper to a Man in each of those *Capacities*; and how much each of those *Virtues* contributes to the *Happiness* of *Heaven.*

SECT. I.

Concerning those Human Virtues *which belong to a* Man *as he is a* Reasonable Animal, *shewing that they are all included in the* Heavenly Part *of the* Christian Life, *and that the Practice of them effectually conduces to our future Happiness.*

FIRST, We will consider *Man* in the Capacity of a mere *Rational Animal*, that is compounded of contrary Principles, *viz. Spirit* and *Matter*, or a *Rational Soul* and *Human Body*; by which Composition he is, as it were, the Buckle of both Worlds, in whom the *Spiritual* and *Material* World are *clasped* and united together; and partaking as he does, of both Extremes, of *Spirit* and of *Matter*, of *Angel* and *Brute*, there arise within him, from these contrary Natures, contrary Propensions, *viz. Rational* and *Sensual*, or *Angelical* and *Brutish:* And in the due Subordination of these, his *Sensual* to his *Rational* Propensions, consists all Human Virtue.

For his *Reason* being the noblest Principle of his Nature, must be supposed to be implanted in him by God, to *rule* and *govern* him, to be an *Eye* to his blind and brutish Affections, to *correct* the Errors of his Imagination, to *bound* the Extravagancies of his Appetites, and regulate the whole Course of his Actions, so as that he may do nothing that is destructive or injurious to this excellent Frame and Structure of his Nature. But now in this compounded Nature of *Man*, there are his *Concupiscible* and *Irascible Affections*; with the First of which he desires and pursues his *Pleasures*, and with the Second he shuns and avoids his *Dangers*; and there are also *bodily Appetites*, such as Hunger, Thirst, and Carnal Concupiscence; and, together with these, a *Self-Esteem* and *Valuation*; all which are the natural Subjects of his Reason, and indeed the only Subjects upon which it is to exercise its Dominion: So that in the well and ill Government of *these*, consists all *human Virtue* and *Vice*. To the perfect well-governing therefore of a Man's self, there are Five Things indispensably necessary.

1. That he should impartially consult his *Reason*, what is absolutely best for him, and by what means it is best attainable; and then *constantly* pursue what it proposes and directs him to. For so far as he is wanting in this, he casts off the Government of his *Reason*.

2. That he should proportion his *Concupiscible* Affections to the just Value which his *Reason* sets upon those Things which he *affects*: For every Degree of Affection which exceeds the Merit of Things, is *Irrational*, and consequently injurious to our *Rational Nature*.

3. That he should not suffer his *Irascible* Affections to exceed those Evils and Dangers which he would avoid: For if he doth, *they* will prove greater Evils to him, than *those* Evils or Dangers are which raise and provoke them.

4. That he should not indulge his *bodily Appetite* to the Hurt and Prejudice of his *Rational Nature*: For if he does, he will violate the *nobler*, for the sake of the *viler* Part of himself. And,

5. That upon the whole, he should maintain a *modest Opinion* of himself; and not think better of his own *Conduct* and *Management* of himself than it deserves: For by so doing, he will be apt to over-look his own *Misgovernments*, and so incapacitate himself for any farther *Improvements*. And in these Five Particulars consists all that Virtue which belongs to a Man, considered merely in the Capacity of a *Rational Animal*:

The First is the Virtue of *Prudence*,
The Second is the Virtue of *Moderation*,
The Third is the Virtue of *Fortitude*,
The Fourth is the Virtue of *Temperance*,
The Fifth is the Virtue of *Humility*.

All which, as I shall shew, are Essential Parts of the *Christian Life*, and such as do effectually contribute to our *heavenly Happiness*.

I. *Prudence.* And this is the *Root* and *Ground-work* of all other Virtues; 'Tis this that gives *Law* and *Scope* to all our Motions, that proposes the *Ends*, and prescribes the *Measures* of our Actions. For *Prudence* consists in being guided and directed by *Right Reason*, as it proposes to us the worthiest *Ends*, and directs us to the fittest and most effectual *Means* of obtaining them. So that to live *prudently*, is to live in the constant *Exercise* of our *Reason*, and to be continually pursuing such *Ends* as *Right Reason* proposes, by such *Means* as *Right Reason* directs us to, which is the proper Business of all the Virtues of Religion. And hence *Religion*, in the Scripture, is frequently called by the Name of *Wisdom* or *Prudence*; *The Fear of the Lord, that is Wisdom,* saith *Job*; *and to depart from Evil, that is Understanding,* Job xxviii. 28. And, *The Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom,* saith *David*, Psal. cxi. 10. where *the Fear of the Lord* comprehends all the *Acts* of *Religion*; which are therefore *wise* and *prudent*, because they are the fittest *Means* to those worthiest *Ends* which *Right Reason* proposes. So that to exercise our Reason in the *Search* and

Discovery of what is absolutely best for us, and to follow our Reason in the *Pursuit* and *Acquest* of what it discovers to be so, is that Virtue of *Prudence* whereunto we stand obliged, as we are *Rational Animals.*

For our Reason being the *noblest* Principle of our Nature, *that* by which we are raised above the Level of *Brutes*, yea, by which we are allied to *Angels*, and do border upon *God himself*, ought, upon that Account, to be submitted to, as the supreme *Regent* and *Directress* of all our other Powers, and to be looked upon as the *Rule* of our *Will*, and the *Guide* of all our *Animal Motions.* And when, to gratify our *sensual* Appetites, or *unreasonable Passions* we either neglect those *Ends* which our Reason proposes to us, or *pursue* them by such *Means* as our Reason disallows of, we reverse the very Order of our Natures, and tread *Antipodes* to ourselves; and, while we do so, it is impossible we should be happy, either *here*, or *hereafter* : For every Thing, you see, is diseased, while it is in an *unnatural* State and Condition, while its Parts are *displaced*, or put into a *Disorder*, or *distorted* into an unnatural Figure. And so it is with a Man, who, while he preserves his Faculties in their natural *Station* and *Subordination* to each other, while he keeps his *Affections* and *Appetites* in subjection to his *Will*, and his *Will* to his *Reason*, he is *calm* and *quiet*, and enjoys within himself perpetual *Ease* and *Tranquillity* : But when once he *breaks* this Order, and suffers his Passions or his Appetites to *usurp* the Place of his Reason; to *impose* contrary *Ends* to it, or prescribe contrary *Means* ; his Faculties, like *dis-jointed* Members, are in perpetual *Anguish* and *Anxiety*. And hence it is, that in the Course of a wicked Life, we feel such restless Contentions between our *Spirit* and *Flesh*, between the *Law in our Minds*, and the *Law in our Members* ; because our Nature is out of *Tune*, and its Faculties are *displaced* and *disordered*, and that sovereign Principle of *Reason* which should *sway* and *govern* us, is despoſed and made a *Vassal* to our *Appetites* and *Passions* : For in all our evil Courses we *choose* and *refuse*, *resolve* and *act*, not as *Reason* directs us, but as *Sense* and *Passion* byasses us; and our Reason having nothing to do in all this *Brutish Scene* of Action, either sleeps it out, without minding or regarding, or else sits by as an idle Spectator of it, and only *censures* and *condemns* it. And it is this that causes all that *Tumult* and *Contest* that is in our Natures; and till, by the Exercise of *Prudence*, our Faculties are reduced, and set in order again, our *Mind* will be like our *Body*, while its Bones are out of Joint, continually *restless* and *unquiet*. And therefore to remove this great Indisposition of our Nature to Happiness, *Prudence* is required of us, as one of the principal *Virtues* of the *heavenly Part* of the *Christian Life*.

For thus our Saviour enjoins, that we should be *wise as Serpents*, as well as *harmless as Doves*, Mat. x. 16. which tho it be here prescribed in a *particular* Case only, *viz.* that of *Persecution*; yet since the Reason of it extends to *all other* Cases, and it is fit we should be Prudent in *all* our Undertakings, as well as in *suffering Persecution*, it is upon that Account equivalent to an Universal Command. So also, *Ephes.* v. 15. *See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise*, i. e. in the whole Course of your Actions, take heed that ye follow the Guidance of your *Reason*, and do not suffer your selves to be seduced by your blind *Passions* and *Appetites*, which are mere *Ignes fatui*, or the *Guides* of *Fools*. And accordingly the Apostle prays for his Christian *Colossians*, *That they might be filled with the Knowledge of God in all Wisdom and spiritual Understanding*, Col. i. 9. *i. e.* That they might have such a Knowledge of God's Will as might render them truly *prudent*, and cause them to pursue the best *Ends* by the best *Means.* And tho this Virtue seldom occurs in the New Testament, under its own Name; yet, as in the above-named Places, it is expressed by *Wisdom*, so it is elsewhere by *Knowledge*, as particularly, 2 *Cor.* vi. 6. where he commands the Ministers of the Church to approve themselves such by several Virtues; and particularly by *Pureness*, i. e. *Continence* ; and by *Knowledge*, i. e. by *Prudence* : For, besides that *Knowledge*,

as

as it signifies an *Understanding of Divine Things*, was not a *Virtue* in the Apostles, but a *Gift* of God, and so not proper to be enumerated amongst these *Virtues*; there is hardly any Account can be given why the Apostle should place *Knowledge* in the midst of so many *Moral Virtues*, if he did not thereby mean the *Virtue* of *Prudence*, which is, as it were, the *Eye* and *Guide* of all the other *Virtues*. So again, 2 *Pet*. i. 6. where he bids us add to *Faith Virtue*, i. e. Fortitude, or Constancy of Mind; *and to Virtue Knowledge*; *and to Knowledge Temperance*: By *Knowledge*, it is highly probable, he means *Prudence*, because he places it in the midst of those *Two Virtues* which border nearest upon *Prudence*.

Now that the Practice of *this Virtue* is a most proper and effectual *Means* of our *Everlasting Happiness*, is evident from hence; because the Practice of it is a constant Exercise of *Reason*: For to act *prudently* in Religion, is to follow the *best* Reason; to aim at *Heaven*, which is the *best* End, and direct our Actions thither by the *best* Rules: 'Tis to consult what is best for ourselves, and how it may be most *effectually* obtained. In a Word, it is to *intend* the *chiefest Good* above All, and to *level* our Lives and Actions most *directly* towards it: This is *Religious Prudence* in the *General*; and as for those *Particulars* of it, which we are obliged to exercise in the several *States*, *Relations*, and *Circumstances* wherein we are placed, they all consist in doing what is most *fit* and *reasonable*, with respect to that Great and Blessed End.

For by living in the continual Practice of *Religious Prudence*, we shall by degrees habituate ourselves to a Life of *Reason*, and shake off that drousy Charm of *Sense* and *Passion* which hangs upon our Minds, and renders our Faculties so *dull* and *unactive*: And having disused ourselves a while to obey their *blind* and *imperious* Dictates, our Reason will re-assume its Throne in us, and direct all our Aims and Endeavours to what is *fittest* and most *reasonable*. For we being finite and limited Beings, cannot operate *divers* ways with *equal* Vigour *at once*; and our rational and sensitive Propensions are made in such a regular and *æquilibrious* Order, that proportionably as the one does *increase* in Activity, the other always *decay*; and so accordingly as we abate in the Strength of our *Brutish*, we shall *improve* in the Vigour of our *Rational* Faculties. But to act suitably to their Natures, being the End of all our *Faculties* and *Powers of Action*, the God of Nature, to excite them thereto, has founded all their *Pleasure* in the *vigorous* Exercise of them upon suitable Objects. Since therefore our *Reason* is the best and noblest of all *Powers of Action*, to be sure the greatest *Pleasure* we are capable of, must spring out of the Exercise of our *Reason*. Wherefore since *Prudence* consists in the *Use* of our *Reason*, the Practice thereof must needs effectually contribute to our *Pleasure* and *Happiness*: For *Use* and *Exercise* will mightily *strengthen* and *improve* our Reason, and render it not only more *apprehensive* of what is fit and reasonable, but also more *persuasive* and *prevalent*; and when once it is improved into a *prevailing Principle* of Action, and hath acquired not only *Skill* enough to *prescribe* what is right to us, but also *Power* enough to *persuade* us to comply with its Prescriptions; to *choose* and *refuse*, to *love* and *hate*, to *hope* and *fear*, *desire* and *delight*, and regulate all our Actions by its Laws and Dictates, then are we entring upon our *Heaven* and *Happiness*.

For that which makes us *unhappy*, is, that our sinful and unreasonable Affections do so *hamper* and *intangle* us, that we cannot *freely* exercise our Faculties upon such Objects as are most suitable to them; that our Minds and Wills are so *fettered* by our vicious Inclinations, that we cannot exert them upon that which is most worthy to be *Known* and *Chosen*, without a great deal of *Difficulty* and *Distraction*? But now under the Conduct of our *Reason*, our Faculties will, by Degrees, recover their *Freedom*, and disengage themselves from those vicious *Encumbrances*, which do so *clog* and *interrupt* them in their Rational Motions: And when this is thorowly effected, we are in full Possession of the *heavenly State*, which (as I have shewed) consists in the *free*

 and

and *vigorous* Exercise of our Rational Faculties upon the *best* and *worthiest* Objects: For when once our *Passions* and *Appetites* are perfectly subdued to our *Reason*, all our Rational Faculties will be *free*, and every one will move towards its proper Object, without any *Lett* or *Hindrance*; our *Understanding* will be swallow'd up in a fix'd Contemplation of the *sublimest Truths*; our *Wills* entirely resigned to the Choice and Embraces of the *truest Good*; our *Affections* unalterably devoted to the Love and Fruition of the most *excellent Beauty and Perfection*; and in this consists the happy State of *Heaven*: So that to live *prudently*, or, which is the same, to govern ourselves by our *best Reason*, is both a *necessary* and *effectual* Means of attaining to the *Heavenly State*.

II. Another Virtue which appertains to a Man, considered merely as a *Rational Animal*, is *Moderation*; which consists in proportioning our *concupiscible* Affections to the just worth and value of Things; so as neither to spend our Affections *too prodigally* upon Trifles, nor yet be *oversparing* or *niggardly* of them to real and substantial Goods: But to *love*, *desire* and *expect* Things more or less, according to the Estimate which our best and most impartial *Reason* makes of their Worth and Goodness. For he that affects Things more than in the Esteem of Reason they deserve, affects them *irrationally*, and regulates his Passion by his *wild* and *extravagant* Imagination, and not by his *Reason* and *Judgment*. And while Men do thus neglect their *Reason*, and accustom themselves to *desire*, and *love*, and *affect* without it, they necessarily disable themselves to enjoy a *Rational Happiness*. For, besides that their Rational Faculties being thus *laid by*, and *unemployed*, will naturally contract *Rust*, and grow every Day more *weak* and *restive*; besides, that their *unexercised* Reason will *melt away* in Sloth and Idleness, and all its vital Powers *freeze* for want of motion, and, like standing Water, *stagnate* and gather mire, and by degrees *corrupt* and *putrify*, till at last it will be impossible to revive them to the *vigorous Exercise* and *Motion* wherein their Pleasure and Happiness consists: Besides this, I say, by habituating ourselves to affect Things *irrationally*, *i. e.* to love the *least* Goods *most*, and the *greatest least*, we shall disable ourselves from enjoying *any* Goods, but only such as cannot make us happy. For he that loves any Good more than it is worth, can never be happy in the enjoyment of it; because he *thinks* there is more in it than he *finds*, and so is always *disappointed* in the *Fruition* of it. And the *Grief* of being disappointed of what he *expects*, does commonly countervail the *Pleasure* of what he *finds* and *enjoys*. While he is in the *pursuit* of any Good which he *inordinately* dotes upon, he is *wild* and *imaginative*; he swells with *Fantastick* Joys, and juggles himself into *Expectations*, that are as large and boundless as his *Desires*: But when once he is *seiz'd* of it, and finds how vastly the *Enjoyment* falls short of his *Expectation*, his *Pleasure* is presently lost in his *Disappointment*, and so he remains as unsatisfied as ever. And thus if he were to spend an Eternity in such *Pursuits* and *Enjoyments*, his Life would be nothing but an Everlasting Succession of *Expectations* and *Disappointments*. So that all *inordinate* Affection destroys its own *Satisfaction*, and necessarily renders us by so many Degrees miserable, as it exceeds the real Worth and Value of Things.

Besides which, also, it is to be considered, that all these *lesser* Goods which are the Objects of our *Extravagant Affections*, are Things which we must ere long be for ever *deprived* of: For the *lesser* Goods are those, which are only good for the *worser* part of us, that is, for our *Body* and *Animal Life*; the proper Goods whereof are the *Outward Sensitive* Enjoyments of this World; all which, when we leave this World, we must leave *for ever*, and go away into Eternity, with nothing about us, but only the good or bad *Dispositions* of our Souls. So that if our Soul be *carnaliz'd* thro' our *immoderate Affection* to the Things of this World, we shall carry that *Affection* with us, but leave the Things which we thus vehemently *affect* behind us for ever.

For that which is the *prevailing Temper* of Souls in this Life, will doubtless be so in the other too; so far is that of the Poet true,

——Quæ gratia currûm
Amorûmque fuit vivis, quæ cura nitentes
Pascere equos, eadem sequitur tellure repôstos.

For tho the coming into the other World, will questionless *improve* those Souls which are *really good* before; yet it is not to be imagined how it should *create* those *good*, who are *habitually bad*; and if we *retain* in the *other* World that *prevailing Affection* to these sensitive Goods which we *contracted* in *this*, it must necessarily render us unspeakably *miserable* there. For every *Lust* the Soul carries into the other World, will, by being eternally separated from its *Pleasures*, convert into an *Hopeless Desire*, and upon that account grow more *furious* and *impatient*. For of all the Torments of the Mind, I know none that is comparable to that of an outragious *Desire* joined with *Despair* of Satisfaction; which is just the Case of Sensual and Worldly-minded Souls in the other Life, where they are full of *sharp* and *unrebated* Desires, and, like starving Men, that are shut up between two dead Walls, are tormented with a *fierce* but *hopeless* Hunger, which, having nothing else to feed on, preys and quarries on *themselves*; and in this desolate Condition they are forced to wander to and fro, tormented with a restless *Rage*, an hungry and unsatisfied *Desire*, craving Food, but neither *finding* nor *expecting* any; and so in unexpressible Anguish they pine away a long Eternity. And tho they might find Content and Satisfaction, could they but *divert* their Affections another way, and reconcile them to the heavenly Enjoyments; yet being irrecoverably pre-engaged to sensual *Goods*, they have no savour or relish of any thing else, but are like *Feverish Tongues* that disgust and nauseate the most grateful Liquors, by reason of their own *over-flowing Gall*: So impossible is it for Men to be happy, either here or hereafter, so long as their Affections to the lesser Goods of this World do so immoderately exceed the worth and value of them.

One Essential Part therefore of the *Christian Life*, which is the Great *Means* of our Happiness, is the Virtue of *Moderation*; the peculiar Office whereof is to bound our *Concupiscible* Affections, and proportion them to the Intrinsick Worth of those outward Goods which we *affect* and *desire*: For tho the word *Moderation*, according to our present acceptation of it, be no where to be found in the New Testament, yet the Virtue expressed by it is frequently enjoined; as particularly where we are forbid to *set our Affections upon the Things of the Earth*, Col. iii. 2. *To love the World, or the Things that are in the World*, 1 John ii. 15. Which Phrases are not to be so understood, as if we were not to love the Enjoyments of the World *at all*; for they are the Blessings of God, and such as he has proposed to us in his Promises, as the *Rewards* and *Encouragements* of our Obedience; and to be sure, he would never encourage us to obey him by the Hope of such Rewards as are *unlawful* for us to desire and love: The meaning therefore of these Prohibitions, is, that we should so *moderate* our Affections to the World, as not to permit them to exceed the real Worth and Value of its Enjoyments. For it is not *simply* our loving it, but our loving it to *such a degree* as is inconsistent with our Love of God, that is here forbidden: For *he that loveth the World* (saith St. *John*) *the love of the Father is not in him*; *i. e.* he that loves it to such a degree, as to *prefer* the Riches, Honours and Pleasures of it, *before God*, and his *Duty* to him, hath no real Love to God, *i. e.* he loves not God *as God*, as the chiefest Good, and supreme Beauty and Perfection. And hence *Covetousness*, which is an immoderate Desire of the World, is called *Idolatry*, Col. iii. 5. because it sets the World in the place of God, and gives it that supreme Degree of Affection, which is only due to Him; and this the Apostle there calls *Inordinate Affection*, because it extravagantly exceeds the intrinsick Worth and Value of its Objects. Wherefore we are strictly enjoined *to take heed and beware*

ware of Covetousness, Luke xii. 15. And to *let our Conversation be without Covetousness*, Heb. xiii. 5. By all which, and sundry other Commands and Prohibitions of the Gospel, the *Moderation* of our *Concupiscible* Affections is made a necessary part of the *Christian Life*.

Now that this also mightily contributes to our acquisition of the *heavenly Happiness*, is evident, not only from what hath been already said, but also from hence, that till our Affections are thus *moderated*, we can have no Savour or Relish of the *heavenly Enjoyments*. For in this corrupt State of our Nature, we generally *understand* by our *Affections*, which, like *coloured Glass*, represent all Objects to us in their own *Hue* and *Complexion*. When therefore a Man's *Affections* are immoderately carried out towards worldly Things, they will be sure by degrees to corrupt and deprave his *Judgment*, and render him as unfit to judge of Divine and Spiritual Enjoyments, as a *Plowman* is to be a *Moderator* in the *Schools*. For when a Man's Thoughts have been employed another way, and the Delights of *Sense* have for a long while preoccupied his *Understanding*, he will judge Things to be *Good* or *Evil*, according as they *disgust* or *gratify* his lower Appetites: And this being the Standard by which he measures Things, 'tis impossible he should have any Savour of those *Spiritual Goods* in which the Happiness of Heaven consists. For tho in his Nature there is a Tendency to *Rational Pleasures*, yet this he may, and very frequently does, stifle and extinguish, by addicting himself wholly to the Delights and Gratifications of his *Sense*, which by degrees will so melt down his *Rational* Inclinations into his *Sensual*, and confound and mingle them with his *Carnal Appetites*, that his *Soul* will wholly sympathize with his *Body*, and have all *Likes* and *Dislikes* in common with it; and there is nothing will be capable of pleasing the *one*, but what does gratify the unbounded Liquorishness of the *other*.

Now to such a Soul the spiritual World must needs be a *barren Wilderness*, where no Good grows that it can live upon, none but what is nauseous and distasteful to its *coarse* and *vitiated* Palate; where there are noble Entertainments, indeed, for Minds that are *contempered* to them, that have already tasted and experienced them, but not one drop of Water to cool the Tip of a *Sensual* Tongue, or gratify the Thirst of a *Carnal Desire*. So that were we admitted to that heavenly Place where the Blessed dwell, yet unless we had acquired their heavenly *Disposition* and *Temper*, we could never participate with them in their Pleasures. For so great would be the Antipathy of our sensual Affections to them, that we should doubtless fly away from them, and rather choose to be for ever *Insensible*, than be condemned to an everlasting *Perception* of what is so *ungrateful* to our Natures. So that till we have in some measure moderated our *Concupiscible Affections*, and weaned them from their excessive Dotages upon *sensual Good*, it is impossible we should enjoy the Happiness of Heaven: For such perfect Opposites are a *Spiritual* Heaven and a *Carnal* Mind, that unless This be *Spiritualized*, or That be *Carnalized*, it is impossible they should ever meet and agree.

III. Another Virtue that belongs to a Man, considered merely as a *Rational Animal*, is *Fortitude*; which in the largest Sense, consists in not permitting our *Irascible Affections*, to exceed those Evils or Dangers which we seek to repel or avoid; in keeping our *Fear* and *Anger*, our *Malice*, *Envy* and *Revenge*, in such due subjection, as not to let them exceed those Bounds, which Reason, and the Nature of Things, prescribe them: For I do not take *Fortitude* here in the narrow sense of the *Moralists*, as it is a *Medium* between *Irrational Fear* and *Fool-hardiness*; but as it is the Rule by which all those *Irascible* Passions in us, which arise from the sense of any Evil or Danger, ought to be guided and directed; that by which we are to guard and defend ourselves, against all those *troublesome* and *disquieting* Impressions, which outward Evils and Dangers are apt to make upon our Minds. And in this Latitude, *Fortitude* comprehends not only *Courage*, as it is opposed to *Fear*; but also *Gentleness*,

tleness, as it is opposed to *Fierceness*; *Sufferance*, as it is opposed to *Impatience*; *Contentedness*, as it is opposed to *Envy*; and *Meekness*, as it is opposed to *Malice* and *Revenge*: All which are the Passions of *weak* and *pusillanimous* Minds, that are not able to withstand an Evil, nor endure the least Touch of it, without being *startled* and *disordered*; that are so softned with Baseness and Cowardice, that they cannot resist the most gentle Impressions of Injury. For as sick Persons are offended with the Light of the Sun, and the Freshness of the Air, which are highly *pleasant* and *delightful* to such as are well and in Health; even so Persons of weak and feeble Minds are easily offended, their Spirits are so tender and effeminate, that they cannot endure the least Air of Evil should blow upon them; and what would be only a *Diversion* to a couragious Soul, *troubles* and *incommodes* them. And whatsoever Courage such Persons may pretend to, it's merely a Heat and Ferment of their Blood and Spirits; a Courage, wherein *Game-Cocks* and *Mastiffs* out-vie the greatest *Heroes* of them all. But as to that which is truly Rational and Manly, which consists in a firm Composedness of Mind, in the midst of evil or dangerous Accidents, they are the most wretched Cowards in Nature. For the true *Fortitude* of the Mind consists in being hardned against Evil upon *Rational Principles*; in being so fenced and guarded with *Reason* and *Consideration*, as that no dolorous Accident from without is able to invade it, or raise any violent Commotions in it: In a word, in having such a constant Power over its *irascible* Affections, as not to be over-prone, either to be timorous in Danger, or envious in Want, or impatient in Suffering, or angry at Contempt, or malicious and revengeful under Injuries and Provocations. And till we have in some Measure acquired this Virtue, we can never be happy either here or hereafter.

For whilst we are in this World, we must expect to be encompassed with continual Crouds of evil Accidents, some or other of which will be always pressing upon and justling against us: So that if our Minds are *sore* and *uneasy*, and over-apt to be *affected* with the Evil, we shall be continually *pained* and *disquieted*. For whereas were our Minds but *calm* and *easy*, all the evil Accidents that befal us, would be but like a Shower of Hail upon the Tiles of a Musick-House, which with all its *Clatter* and *Noise*, disturbs not the Harmony that is *within*; our being too apt to be moved into Passion by them, *uncovers* our Mind to them, and lays it open to the Tempest. And commonly the greatest Hurt which these outward Evils do us, is, the *disturbing* our Minds into violent Passions; and this they will never cease doing, till we have thorowly *fortified* our Reason against them: For if our Reason commands not our Passions, to be sure *outward Accidents* will; and while they do so, we are Tenants at will to them for all our Peace and Happiness; and according as they happen to be *Good* or *Bad*, so must we be sure still to be *Happy* and *Miserable*. And in this Condition, like a Ship without a Pilot, in the midst of a Tempestuous Sea, we are the sport of every Wind and Wave, and know not, till the Event hath determin'd it, how the next Billow will dispose of us; whether it will dash us against a *Rock*, or drive us into a quiet *Harbour*.

So miserable is our Condition *here*, while we are utterly destitute of this Virtue of *Fortitude*: But much more miserable will the want of it necessarily render us *hereafter*. For all those *Affections* which fall under the Inspection and Government of *Fortitude*, are, in their *Excesses*, naturally vexatious to the Mind, and do always disturb and raise Tumults in it: For so *Wrath* and *Impatience* distracts and alienates it from itself, and confounds its Thoughts, and shuffles them together into a heap of wild and disorderly Fancies; so *Malice*, *Envy*, and *Revenge*, do fill it with anxious biting Thoughts, that, like young Vipers, gnaw the Womb that bears them, and fret and gall the wretched Mind that forms and gives them Entertainment. And tho in this World we are not so sensible of the mischief which these black and rancorous Passions do us; partly, because our sense of them is *abated* with the intermixture of

our bodily Pleasures; and partly, because while we operate as we do, by these unwieldy Organs of Flesh, our Reflections cannot be comparably so *quick*, nor our Passions so *violent*, nor our Perceptions so *brisk* and *exquisite* as they will doubtless be, when we are stript into naked Spirits; yet if we go away into the other World with these *Affections unmortified* in us, they will not only be far more *violent* and *outragious* than now, and we shall not only have a far quicker Sense of them than now; but this our sharp Sense of them shall be *pure* and *simple*, without any intermixture of Pleasure to soften and allay it. And if so, Good Lord! What exquisite *Devils* and *Tormenters* will they prove, when an extreme *Rage* and *Hate*, *Envy* and *Revenge* shall be all together, like so many hungry Vultures preying on our Hearts; and our Mind shall be continually *baited* and *worried*, with all the furious Thoughts which these outragious Passions can suggest to us. When with the meagre Eyes of *Envy* we shall look up towards the Regions of Happiness, and incessantly *pine* and *grieve* at the Felicities of those that inhabit them; when, thro' a Sense of our own *Follies*, and of the miserable effects of them, our *Rage* and *Impatience* shall be heightned, and boiled up into a *diabolical Fury*; and when, at the same Time, an inveterate *Malice* against all that we converse with, and a fierce desire of *Revenging* ourselves upon those who have contributed to our Ruin, shall, like a Wolf in our Breasts, be continually gnawing and feeding upon our Souls, what an insupportable *Hell* shall we be to ourselves! Doubtless, that *outward Hell* to which bad Spirits are condemned is very terrible; but I cannot imagine, but that the worst of their Hell is *within* themselves, and that their own *devilish Passions* are severer *Furies* to them than all those *Devils*, that are without them. For *Wrath* and *Envy*, *Malice* and *Revenge*, are both the Nature and the Plague of Devils; and tho, as Angels, they are the Creatures of God; yet, as Devils, they are the Creatures of these their devilish *Affections*; they were *these* that transformed them from blessed Angels into cursed Fiends; and could they but once cease to be *envious* and *malicious*, they would cease to be Devils, and turn blessed Angels again. If then these rancorous *Affections* have such a malignant Influence, as to *blacken* Angels into Devils, and make them the most miserable, who were once the most *happy* Creatures; how can we ever expect to be happy, so long as we indulge and harbour them?

Wherefore, to remove this great Impediment of our Happiness, Christianity strictly enjoins us to practise this necessary Virtue of *Fortitude*, which consists in the due Regulation of all these our *Irascible Affections*; in moderating our *Anger* and *Impatience*, suppressing our *Envy*, and extinguishing all our unreasonable *Hatred* and desire of *Revenge*. For hitherto tend all those Evangelical Precepts, which require us to *put away all bitterness and wrath, all clamour and evil-speaking, and malice*, Eph. iv. 31. *to lay aside all malice, and to be Children in malice*, 1 Pet. ii. 1. 1 Cor. xiv. 20. *to be strengthened with all might unto all patience and long-suffering*, Col. i. 11. And accordingly all the Virtues which are comprehended in this of *Fortitude*, are reckoned among the Fruits of that Blessed Spirit, by which we are to be guided and directed: *Gal.* v. 22. *But the fruit of the Spirit is peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, and meekness*; all which are nothing but this great Virtue of *Fortitude*, severally exerting itself upon those several *Irascible Affections*, that are in us, and guiding and regulating them according to those Laws and Directions which Right Reason severally prescribes them; and setting such Bounds and Limits to each of them, as are necessary to the Peace and Happiness of our Rational Natures; that so when outward Dangers or Evils do excite them, they may not start out into such wild Excesses as to become *Plagues* and *Diseases* to our Minds.

Now how much the Practice of this Virtue conduces to our heavenly Happiness, is evident from hence, That all the Diseases and Distemperatures which our Mind is capable of, are nothing else but the *Excesses* of its *Concupiscible* and *Irascible Affections*; nothing but its being affected with Good and

Evil *beyond* those Limits and Measures which Right Reason prescribes. Did we but love outward Goods according to the Value, at which true Reason rates them, we should neither be vexed with an *impatient Desire* of them, while we *want*, nor disappointed of our *Expectation*, while we *enjoy them*. And when our Desires towards these outward Goods are reduced to that Coolness and Moderation, as neither to be *impatient* in the *Pursuit*, nor dissatisfied in the *Enjoyment* of them, it is impossible they should give any Disturbance to our Minds. And so on the other hand, did we but take care to regulate our Resentments of outward Evils and Dangers as Right Reason advises, they would never be able to *hurt* or *discompose* our Minds: For Right Reason advises, that we should not so resent them, as to *increase* and *aggravate* them; that we should not add the Disquietude of an *anxious Fear* to the Dangers that threaten us; nor the Torment of an *outragious Anger*, to the Indignities that are offered us; nor the Smart of a *peevish Impatience* to the Sufferings that befal us; in a word, that we should not aggravate our Want thro' an *invidious pining* at another's Fulness, nor sharpen the Injuries that are offered us by a *malicious* and *revengeful* Resentment of them. And he that follows the Advices of *Reason*, and conducts his *Irascible Affections* by them, has a Mind that is elevated above the Reach of Injury; that sits above the Clouds in a calm and quiet Æther, and with a brave Indifferency hears the rowling Thunders grumble and burst under its feet. And whilst outward Evils fall upon *timorous* and *peevish* and *malicious* Spirits, like Sparks of Fire upon a heap of Gunpowder, and do presently blow them up, and put them all in Combustion; when they happen to a *dis-passionate* Mind, they fall like Stones on a Bed of Down, where they sit easily and quietly, and are received with a calm and soft Compliance. When therefore by the continual Practice of *Moderation* and *Fortitude*, we have tamed and civilized our *Concupiscible* and *Irascible* Affections, and reduced them under the Government of Reason, our Minds will be free from all *Disease* and *Disturbance*, and we shall be liable to no other Evil but that of bodily Sense and Passion. So that when we leave our *Bodies*, and go into the World of *Spirits*, we shall presently feel ourselves in perfect *Health* and *Ease*: For the *Health* of a Reasonable Soul consists in being *perfectly Reasonable*, in having all its Affections *perfectly* subdued to a well-inform'd Mind, and clothed in the Livery of its Reason. And while it is thus, it cannot be diseased in that *Spiritual State*, wherein it will be wholly separated from all *bodily* Sense and Passion; because it has no Affection in it that can any way disturb or ruffle its calm and gentle Thoughts. And then feeling all within it self to be *well*, and as it should be; every String tuned into a perfect Harmony; every Motion and Affection corresponding with the most perfect *draughts* and *models* of its own Reason, it must needs highly *approve* of, and be perfectly *satisfied* with itself; and while it surveys its own Motions and Actions, it must necessarily have a most delicious Gust and Relish of them, they being all such as its best and purest Reason approves of, with a *full* and *ungainsaying* Judgment. And thus the Soul being cured of all irregular Affection, and removed from *all corporeal* Passion, will live in perfect *Health* and *Vigour*, and for ever enjoy within itself a Heaven of *Content* and *Peace*.

IV. Another Virtue which appertains to a Man, considered merely as a *Rational Animal*, is *Temperance*; which consists in not indulging our *bodily Appetites*, to the hurt and prejudice of our *Rational Nature*; or, in refraining from all those *Excesses* of bodily Pleasure, of Eating, Drinking, and Venery, which do either *disorder* our *Reason*, or *indispose* us to enjoy the pure and spiritual Pleasures of the Mind. For besides that all Excesses of *bodily* Pleasures are naturally prejudicial to our *Reason*, as they indispose those bodily Organs by which it operates, (for so *Drunkenness* dilutes the Brain, which is the Mint of the Understanding, and drowns those Images it stamps upon it, in a Flood of unwholesome Rheums and Moistures; and *Gluttony* clogs the Animal Spirits, which are, as it were, the Wings of the Mind, and indisposes them for

the highest and noblest Flights of Reason; so *Wantonness* chases the Blood into feverish Heats, and by causing it to boil up too fast into the Brain, disorders the Motions of the Spirits there, and so confounds the *Phantasms*, that the Mind can have no clear or distinct Perception of them; by which means our Intellectual Faculties are very often *interrupted*, and forced to sit still for want of proper Tools to work with; and so, by often *loitering*, grow, by degrees, *listless* and *unactive*, and at the last are utterly *indisposed* to any Rational Operations;) besides this, I say, (which must needs be a mighty prejudice to our Rational Nature) by too much *familiarizing* ourselves to *bodily* Pleasures, we shall break off all our *acquaintance* with *spiritual* ones; and grow, by degrees, such utter Strangers to them, that we shall never be able to relish and enjoy them; and our *Soul* will contract such an *Uxorious Fondness* of the *Body* (*that* being the Shop of all the Pleasure it was ever acquainted with) that 'twill never be able to live happily without it: For tho in its separate State it cannot be supposed that the Soul will retain the *Appetites* of the Body; yet, if while it is in the Body, it wholly abandons itself to *Corporeal* Pleasures, it may, and doubtless will retain a vehement *hankering* after it, and *longing* to be re-united to it; which, I conceive, is the only sensuality that a separated Soul is capable of: For when such a Soul arrives into the Spiritual World, her having wholly accustom'd herself to *bodily* Pleasures, and never experienc'd *any other*, will necessarily render her incapable of enjoying the Pleasures of Pure and Blessed Spirits. So that being left utterly destitute of all her dear Delights and Satisfactions, which are such as she knows she can never enjoy but in *Conjunction* with the *Body*, all her Appetite and Longing must necessarily be an outragious Desire of being *Embodied* again, that so she may be capable of repeating her old *sensual* Pleasures, and acting over the *brutish* Scene anew.

And this, as some think, is the Reason why such *gross* and *sensual* Souls have appeared so often, after their Separation, in the *Church-yards*, or *Charnel-Houses*, where their Bodies were laid; because they cannot please themselves without them: Ἡ δὲ (ψυχὴ) ἐπιθυμητικῶς τοῦ σώματος ἔχουσα, περὶ ἐκεῖνο πολὺν χρόνον ἐπτοημένη, καὶ περὶ τὸν ὁρατὸν τόπον πολλὰ ἀντιτείνασα, καὶ πολλὰ παθοῦσα, βίᾳ καὶ μόλις ὑπὸ τοῦ προστεταγμένου δαίμονος οἴχεται ἀγομένη. *The Soul that is infected with a great Lust to the Body, continues so, for a great while after Death; and suffering great Reluctances, hovers about this visible Place, and is hardly drawn from thence by force, by the Dæmon that hath the Guard and Care of it.* Where, by the *visible Place*, he means, Περὶ τὰ μνήματά τε καὶ τοὺς τάφους, περὶ ἃ δὴ καὶ ὤφθη ἄττα ψυχῶν σκιοειδῆ φαντάσματα. That is, *About their Monuments and Sepulchres, where the shadowy Phantasms of such Souls have sometimes appeared.* For being utterly unacquainted with the Pleasures of *Spirits*, they have nothing in all the Spiritual World to feed their hungry Desire; which makes them, when they are permitted to wander, to hover about, and linger after their *Bodies*; the Impossibility of being re-united to them, not being able to cure them of their impotent Desire of it, but still they would fain be alive again, and reassume their old Instruments of Pleasure;

Plat. Phæd. pag. 398.

Ibid. 386.

——*Iterumque ad tarda reverti*
Corpora:————

——*Quæ lucis miseris tam dira Cupido?*

And hence, among other Reasons, it was, that the Primitive Christians did so severely abstain from bodily Pleasures, that by this means they might gently *wean* the Soul from the Body, and teach it before-hand to live upon the Delights of separated Spirits; that so, upon its Separation, it might drop into Eternity, like ripe Fruit from the Tree, with Ease and Willingness; and that by accustoming it before to *spiritual* Pleasures and Delights, it might acquire such a savoury Sense and Relish of them, as to be able, when it came into the *spiritual* World, to live wholly upon them; and to be so intirely satisfied

tisfied with them, as not to be endlesly vex'd with a tormenting Desire of returning to the Body again. For so *Clemens Alexandrinus*, Ἡμῖν δὲ τοῖς θηρωμένοις τὴν βρῶσιν τὴν ἐπουράνιον, ἄρχειν ἀνάγκη τῆς ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν γαστρὸς, ἔτι τε μᾶλλον καὶ τῶν ταύτῃ προσφιλῶν. *We that are hunting after the heavenly Food, must take heed that we keep our earthly Belly in subjection, and to keep a strict Government over those Things that are pleasant to it:* For saith he, a little before, Οὔτε γὰρ ἔργον ἡμῖν ἡ τροφὴ, οὔτε σκοπὸς ἡδονή. ὥσπερ δὲ τῆς ἐνταῦθα διαμονῆς, ἣν ὁ λόγος εἰς ἀφθαρσίαν παιδαγωγεῖ· *Neither* (saith he) *is Food our Work, nor Pleasure our Aim; but we use them only as Necessaries to our present Abode, in which our Reason is instituting, and training us up to a Life incorruptible: i. e.* They did so use them, as that, as much as in them lay, they might wean their Souls from the Pleasures of them, that so they might have the better Appetite to that Spiritual Food upon which they were to live for ever.

Pædag. *l.* 2. *c.* 1. *p.* 141.

Ibid *p.* 139.

And therefore thus to *temperate* and *restrain* ourselves in the Use of bodily Pleasures, is one of the necessary Virtues of the *Christian Life:* For hitherto tend all those Precepts concerning *Abstaining from fleshly Lusts which war against our Souls*, 1 Pet. ii. 11. and *mortifying the Deeds of the Body*, Rom. viii. 13. and *keeping under the Body*, 1 Cor. ix. 27. and *putting off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh*, Col. ii. 11. And we are strictly enjoined *to be temperate in all Things, to watch and be sober, and walk honestly as in the Day, not in Rioting and Drunkenness; not in Chambering and Wantonness, not in excess of Wine, Revellings and Banquettings.* The sense of all which, is, That we should not indulge our *bodily* Appetites, to the vitiating and depraving of our *Spiritual*; that we should not plunge ourselves so far in the Pleasures of the *Flesh*, as to drown our Sense and Perception of *divine* and *heavenly* Enjoyments; but that we should so far subdue and mortify our *Sensuality*, as that it may not have the *Dominion* over us, nor be the *prevalent* Delight and Complacency of our Souls; but that the *commanding* Bias, and *swaying* Propension within us, may be towards divine and heavenly Enjoyments; that so, when we leave this Body, we may not be so *wedded* to the Pleasures of it, as not to be able to be happy without them; but that we may carry with us into Eternity such a quick Sense and lively Relish of the Pleasures above, as to be able to *live upon*, and be for ever *satisfied* with them.

So that at first view it is evident how much the Practice of this Virtue conduces to our Future Happiness: For by taking us off from all Excess of bodily Pleasure, it disposes us to enjoy the Pleasures of Heaven, and *connaturalizes* our Souls to them: So that when after a long Exercise of *Temperance*, we come to leave the *Body*, our Soul will be so loosened from it before-hand, and rendred so indifferent to the *Delights* of it, that we shall be able to part both with *It* and *Them*, without any great *Regret* or *Reluctancy*, and to live from them for ever, without any disquieting *Longings* or *Hankerings* after them. For, as when we are grown up by Age and Experience, to a sense of more *Manly* Pleasures, we despise Nuts and Rattles, which, when we were *Children* we accounted our Happiness, and should have reckoned ourselves undone, had we been deprived of them: So when by the Practice of a severe *Temperance*, we have acquired a thorow sense of the Pleasures of *Virtue* and *Religion*, we shall look upon all our *bodily* Pleasures as the little Toys and Fooleries of our Infant-State, with which we pleased our Childish Fancies, when we knew no better. And whereas had we been deprived of them *then*, we should have cried and bemoaned ourselves, as little Children do when they lose their Play-Games, and reckon ourselves undone and miserable; upon the Experience we have had of the *Nobler* and more *Generous* Pleasures of Religion, we shall be able to despise these *little, poor* Entertainments of our Infancy; to take our leave of them without a Tear in our Eyes, and to live Eternally without missing them: For our Minds being for the main reconciled to *Rational* and *Spiritual* Pleasures, we shall put off all Remains of *bodily* Lust

with

with our *Bodies*, and so fly away into the spiritual World, with none but *Pure* and *Spiritual* Appetites about us; where meeting with an *infinite Fulness* of Spiritual Joys and Pleasures, of which we had many a *foretaste* in the Body, our *predisposed* Mind will presently close with, and feed upon them, with such an *unspeakable* Content and Satisfaction, as will *ravish* it for ever from the Thoughts of all other Pleasures. So that now we shall not only be able to *subsist* without fleshly Delights, but to *despise* and *scorn* them; our Faculties being treated every Moment with far *nobler* Fare, and *better* Joys.

V. Another of those Virtues which belong to a Man considered merely as a *Rational Animal*, is *Humility*; which consists in a *modest* and *lowly* Opinion of ourselves, and of our own *Acquisitions*, *Merits*, or *Endowments*; or, in not valuing ourselves beyond what is *due* and *just*, upon the account of any Good we are possessed of, whether it be *Internal* or *External*. For *Pride*, or an *overweaning Self-conceit*, is the Bane of all our Virtue and Happiness: It causes us to overlook our *Defects*, and thereby hinders us from making farther *Improvement*; and it possesses us with an Opinion, that we *deserve* more than we have, and thereby renders us *dissatisfied* with our present Enjoyments. For by how much any Man *over-values* himself, by so much he *under-values* what he enjoys; because while he compares what he enjoys, with the fond Opinion that he hath of himself, he always finds it *short* of his Desert; and so can never be *satisfied* with it. Yea, such is the cross and capricious Humour of a proud Spirit, that the more it possesses, the bigger it swells with the Opinion of its own Desert; and the *more* it is opinionated of its own Desert, the *less* it is satisfied with that which it possesses and enjoys; For when a Man is exceeding apt to *flatter* and *coaks* himself, he will catch at any Pretence to exalt his own Merit and Desert, and be ready to measure it not only by what he *is*, but by what he *has* too; and then reckoning his *outward* Possessions to be the Rewards or Products of his *inward* Worth, the more he *has*, the more he will still imagine he *deserves to have*: So that his *Opinion* of his own *Desert* will still run on so fast before his *Enjoyments*, that tho they should follow it never so close, as the hinder Wheels of a Chariot do the fore ones, yet it would be impossible for them to overtake it: And so long as he conceives his Enjoyments to be *behind* his Desert, he will be always *discontented* and *dissatisfied* with them; and while he continues of this Humour, the utmost Bliss and Glory that Heaven affords would not be able to satisfy him. For if he were set equal in Glory with the *highest Saint*, he would be so puft and exalted by it, in his own Conceit, that he would fansy he merited the Glory of an *Angel*; and if from thence he were advanced to the Throne of an *Arch-Angel*, he would flatter himself into a Conceit, that he deserved the Glory and Dignity of a *God*: And so long as he fansied his Advancement to be *below* his Merit, he would never be *contented* with it, how *high* soever it were; but be continually *vexing* and *repining* that he was raised no *higher*.

And this, I verily believe, was the Temper of the *Devil*, and that which finally ruined and undid him. For when he was an *Angel* of *Light*, he was doubtless placed by the *Father* of *Spirits*, in such an Order or Degree of Dignity, as became the Perfection of his Nature: But he, reflecting on his own Endowments, and the glorious Condition wherein he was placed, began first to swell with an *arrogant* and *over-weaning* Conceit of himself, and to set *too high* a Value upon his own Angelical Graces and Perfections; and as the natural Effect of this, to imagine, that he was not high enough advanced in the Scale of the *heavenly Hierarchy*; and that his *Station*, in the Commonwealth of Angels, was beneath the Grandeur and Dignity of his Nature. This made him look up with *envious* Eyes upon the glorious Orders *above* him, into whose sublime Rank he being forbid to aspire by God, the Prince of Spirits, he proceeded, by degrees, to malign and hate both *Him* and *Them*. And this he first expressed, by entring into a *Conspiracy* against him, with some of his Fellow-Angels, whom he found most apt to be wrought upon by him; together with

whom he made an open *Revolt*, forſook the bleſſed Abodes, as not enduring to abide any longer amongſt thoſe Bleſſed Orders whom he ſo inveterately *hated* and *envied:* And ſo, with his revolted *Legions*, deſcends into this Airy Region; where ever ſince he hath perſiſted in open Hoſtility againſt God and Heaven. And accordingly it is ſaid of him and his Accomplices, That they *kept not their firſt Station*; that is, they would needs have a *higher* Station in Heaven than that wherein God had placed them; which becauſe they could not obtain, *they left their own Habitation, i. e.* forſook Heaven, their Native Country and Abode, and came down into theſe lower Parts of the World, upon Deſign to ſtrengthen the Party againſt Heaven, by ſeducing Mankind into the ſame Revolt with themſelves, *Jude* 6.

Thus 'twas the Devil's Pride, you ſee, that made him *Envious*, his *Envy* that made him *Spiteful* and *Malicious*, all which together made him a *Devil*. And thus it would be with *us*, if we could be admitted into Heaven, whilſt we are under the Power and Prevalence of Pride and *Self-conceit*. For while we think better of ourſelves than God does, we ſhall never be *contented* with his Retributions, who will be ſure to deal with every Man according to his Works; and that exceſſive Value we ſhall have of ourſelves, will cauſe us to *under-value* the Degree and Rank of Glory and Happineſs, wherein we ſhall be placed by the Juſt Rewarder of Souls, as a Station much beneath our imagined Excellency and Perfection. And hence we ſhall proceed to *think hardly* of God, and to *repine* againſt Him as a partial and unequal Diſtributer of his Favours, and to *envy* and *malign* thoſe that were placed higher in Glory than ourſelves; and ſo at laſt, out of an implacable *Vexation* and *Diſcontent*, to leave our Habitations, as the Devils did, and fly away to their revolted Party: So impoſſible is it for a Soul that is under a prevailing Habit of *Pride* and *Self-conceit*, to be Happy either here or hereafter.

And therefore to remove this Obſtacle, Chriſtianity impoſes the Practice of *Humility*, as a neceſſary Means of our Happineſs; and requires us *to put on humbleneſs of mind*, Col. iii. 12. *to be clothed with humility*, 1 Pet. v. 5. *to walk with all lowlineſs and meekneſs*, Eph. iv. 1, 2. *and in lowlineſs of Mind, to eſteem others better than ourſelves*, Phil. ii. 3. In a Word, to follow the Example of our Bleſſed Lord, who was *meek and lowly*, Mat. xi. 29. and *in Honour to prefer one another*, Rom. xii. 10. The Senſe of all which is, that we ſhould labour, as much as in us lies, to think very *meanly* and *modeſtly* of ourſelves, and not to be diſcontented if *others* think *meanly* of us too; *i. e.* that we ſhould neither be *proud* nor *vain-glorious*; neither too much exalted in our *own* Opinions, nor endeavour to inſinuate into *others* a higher Opinion of us than we do really deſerve: In ſhort, that we ſhould ſo effectually repreſent to ourſelves the little Reaſon we have to be proud of any Perſonal Accompliſhment, whether it be of Body or Mind, to ſtrut, like *Æſop*'s Crow in theſe borrowed Feathers, which we could neither *give* to ourſelves, nor *merit* of God, but are wholly owing for to the Divine Bounty; ſo to inculcate upon our Minds the Folly and Ridiculouſneſs of being proud of any *outward Goods* we poſſeſs; ſuch as fine Clothes, great Eſtates, or popular Reputation, all which are ſo far from either *making* or *ſpeaking* us *wiſer* or *better* Men, that they are too often the Fruits and Teſtimonies of our *Folly* and *Knavery:* And, in fine, That we ſhould ſo impartially reflect upon the many Follies and Indiſcretions, Errors, and Ignorances, Irregularities of Temper, Defects of Manners, and Deviations from Right Reaſon, that we are guilty of, as to ſhame ourſelves out of all thoſe *proud* and *arrogant* Conceits, that do ſo *ſwell* and *impoſthumate* our Minds.

And when by theſe, and ſuch like *humbling* Reflections, we have laid our ſelves low in our own Eyes, and ſo far abaſed our *Pride* and *Self-Conceit* as to be effectually convinced of the Folly of it, and thorowly perſuaded to abhor and hate it, to watch and ſtrive againſt it, and to be habituated for the main to *mean* and *lowly* Thoughts of ourſelves; tho we ſhould not here

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arrive to an absolute Perfection in *Humility* (having none here to converse or compare ourselves with, but such as ourselves, such as are many of them our *Inferiors*, many our *Equals*, and many but few degrees our *Superiors*,) yet as soon as we go off from this *lower* Form, in which we may seem so considerable, into the Class and Society of those Glorious Inhabitants *above* (in whose bright Presence we shall appear but like so many *Glow-worms*, in the midst of a Firmament of *Stars*) all the *little Remains* of Pride and Self-Conceit in us, will immediately vanish from our Minds: For if at the sight of an Angel the *beloved Apostle* could not forbear prostrating himself; how *prostrate* and *lowly* must we be, when we see not only the whole Choir of Angels together, but God himself too, the Prince and Father of Spirits! For even here we find, that the *nearer* we approach God, the more we *shrink* and *lessen* in our own Eyes; and if in the Presence of *Angels* we are but *Dwarfs*, in the Presence of *GOD*, we shall be *Nothings*. But, Oh! when we shall not only *discern*, how infinitely he outshines us in Glory, but shall also continually *feel*, by the most sensible Communications of his Goodness, how we hang upon Him, and derive every Breath, and Joy, and Glory from Him; how our Being and Well-being are the mere Alms and Pensions of his Bounty; how every Grace and Beauty in us, is but the Reflection, and that a faint one too, of his out-stretched Rays; when, I say, we shall feel all this, as we shall do in Heaven every moment, by a quick and sensible Experience, how must it needs wean us from all *self-arrogating* Thoughts, and perfectly *abase* and *humble* us in our own Eyes! And when this is done, our Minds will be perfectly *tempered* and *prepared* for the Enjoyment of a perfect Happiness: For now, such a *modest* Opinion we shall have of ourselves, that whatsoever degree of Glory we are placed in, we shall look upon it as far beyond our desert, and, upon that account, be unspeakably *satisfied* and *contented* with it, and freely *acknowledge* it to be a Thousand Degrees beyond what we could desire or hope for. And so far shall we be from *grudging* at, or *envying* those above us, that out of an *humble* sense of our own Unworthiness, we shall readily prefer them before ourselves, and freely acknowledge that we are only so many Degrees *inferior* to *them* in Glory, as they are *superior* to us in Divine Graces and Perfections. Upon which we shall not only *acquiesce*, but heartily *rejoice* in their Advancement, and be abundantly *pleased* that their *Reward* is as much greater than ours, as we do acknowledge their *Virtue* to be. In a word, so far shall we be from *repining* and *murmuring* at God, for not rewarding *us* as liberally as *others*, that we shall be thorowly sensible that He hath been bountiful to us infinitely beyond our *Desert* or *Expectation*; that 'twas not out of a fond *Partiality*, or blind *Respect of Persons*, that He raised others to higher Degrees of Glory than our-selves, but out of a Principle of strict *Justice* that exactly balances and adjusts its Rewards according to the Degrees of our Desert and Improvement. The sense of which will not only compose our Minds into a perfect *Satisfaction*, but also continually excite us to those beatifical Acts of *Love* and *Praise*, *Thanksgiving* and *Adoration*. Thus *Humility*, you see, tunes and composes us for Heaven, and only casts us down, like Balls, that we may rebound the higher in Glory and Happiness.

Thus you see how all those Virtues, which appertain to a Man, considered as a *Reasonable Animal*, conduce to the Great Christian End, *viz.* The Happiness of Heaven. 'Tis true, indeed, the immediate product of this sort of Virtue, is only, at least *chiefly privative* Happiness, or, the Happiness of *Rest* and *Indolence*, which consists in *not being miserable*, or, in a perfect *Cessation* from all such Acts and Motions as are *hurtful* and *injurious* to a *Rational Spirit*. For, as I have shewed you in the beginning of this Section, the proper Office of *human Virtue* consists in so regulating all our Powers of Action, as that we do nothing that is hurtful or injurious to our Rational Nature; and this you plainly see, these Five afore-named Virtues do most effectually perform. But besides this *Privative*, there is, as I shewed you, a *Positive* Part of

of Happineſs which conſiſts not in *Reſt*, but in *Motion*; in the Vigorous Exerciſe of our Rational Faculties, upon ſuch Objects as are moſt ſuitable to them: And to the obtaining of this Part of our Happineſs, there are other kinds of Virtues neceſſary to be practiſed by us, of which I ſhall diſcourſe in the two following Sections. But tho the *immediate* Effect of theſe *Human Virtues* we have been diſcourſing of, be only the Happineſs of *Reſt*, yet do they tend a great deal farther, even to the Happineſs of *Motion* and *Exerciſe*. For it is impoſſible ſo to ſuppreſs that Active Principle within us, as to make it totally ſurceaſe from Motion; and therefore as every intermiſſion of its *ſober* and *regular* Actings does but make way for *wild* and *extravagant* ones; ſo every abatement of its *hurtful* and *injurious* Motions, makes way for *beatifical* ones; and ſo the *human Virtues*, by giving us Reſt from thoſe Motions that are *afflictive* to our Natures, incline and diſpoſe us to ſuch Motions and Exerciſe as are moſt *pleaſant* and *grateful* to it.

SECT. II.

Concerning thoſe Divine Virtues *which belong to a* Man *conſidered as a Reaſonable Creature, related to God; ſhewing that theſe alſo are comprehended in the* heavenly Part *of the* Chriſtian Life, *and that the Practice of them effectually conduces to our future Happineſs.*

I Proceed now to the Second kind of Virtues, *viz. Divine*; to which I told you, we are obliged in the capacity of reaſonable Creatures related to *God*, who being not only endowed with all poſſible Perfections, with infinite *Truth* and *Juſtice*, *Wiſdom* and *Power*, with all that can render any Being moſt highly *reverenced*, *admired*, *loved*, and *adored*; who being not only the Author of our Being and Well-being, as he is Creator and Preſerver of all Things, but alſo our Sovereign Lord and King, as He is God Almighty, the Supreme and Over-ruling Power of Heaven and Earth, hath upon all theſe Accounts a juſt and unalienable claim to ſundry Duties and Homages from his Creatures: All which I ſhall reduce to theſe Six Particulars;

1. That we ſhould frequently *think of*, and *contemplate* the Beauty and Perfection of His Nature.
2. That upon the account of theſe Perfections, we ſhould humbly *worſhip* and *adore* Him.
3. That we ſhould ardently *love* and take *complacency* in Him.
4. That we ſhould attentively and unweariedly *imitate* him in all his imitable Perfections and Actions.
5. That we ſhould entirely *reſign up* our-ſelves to his conduct and diſpoſal.
6. That we ſhould chearfully *rely* and *depend* upon him. All which, as I ſhall ſhew, are included in the heavenly Part of the *Chriſtian Life*, and do moſt effectually contribute to our future Happineſs.

I. As we are Rational Creatures related to *God*, we are obliged to be often *contemplating* and *thinking upon* him: For the natural Uſe of our Underſtanding is to contemplate Truth; and therefore the more of *Truth* and *Reality* there is in any knowable Object, and the farther it is removed from *Falſhood* and *Non-entity*, the more the Underſtanding is concerned to *contemplate* and *think upon* it. *God* therefore being the moſt *true* and *real* Object, as he ſtands removed by the *Neceſſity* of his Exiſtence from all *poſſibility* of not-being, muſt needs be the moſt perfect Theme of our Underſtanding, the beſt and greateſt Subject on which it can employ its Meditations; and beſides that he is the moſt *true* and *real* of all Beings, he is alſo the Source and Spring of all *Truth* and *Reality*; his Power, conducted by his Wiſdom and Goodneſs, being the Cauſe not only of all that *is*, but of all that either

shall be, or *can* be. And is it fit, that our Understanding, which was made to *contemplate*, should wholly over-look the Fountain of it? But besides this too, that he is the greatest *Truth* himself, and the Cause of every Thing else that is *true* and *real*; he is the Sovereign of Beings, and the most *amiable* and *perfect*, as he includes in his infinite Essence all possible Perfections both in kind and degree. And what a monstrous Irreverence is it, for Minds that were framed to the Contemplation of Truth, to pass by such a *great* and *glorious* one without any Regard or Observance, as if he stood for a Cypher in the World, and were not worthy to be thought upon? Nay, and besides all this (which one would think were enough to oblige our Understandings to the strictest Attendance to him) he is a Truth, in which, above all others, we are most *nearly concern'd*; as he is not only the *Father* and *Prop* of our Beings, and the *Consolation* of our Lives, but the sole *Arbiter* of our Fate too, upon whom our everlasting well or ill-being depends: And what can we be more concerned to *think* and *meditate* upon than this great Being, from whom we sprang, in whom we live and breathe, and of whom we are to expect all that Evil or Good that we can fear or hope for. All which considered, there is no doubt to be made, but that our Understanding was chiefly made for God, to look up to Him, and contemplate his Being and Perfections. And tho in this *Imperfect* State it is too often averted from him, by this vast variety of sensual things that surround it, and intercept his Prospect; yet, as our Soul recovers out of this *sensual* Condition into a Life of *Reason*, we find, by Experience, that its Understanding presently looks upwards, by a natural Instinct, and directs itself to God, as to its proper *Pole* and *Center*; and as it grows more and more *indifferent* to the Objects of Sense, so it becomes more and more *vigorous* in its Tendency towards God and Divine Things: And 'tis no wonder it doth so, since it is God only, who is an *infinite* Truth, that is able to satisfy its *infinite* Thirst after Truth. And hence it is, that till we have thorowly fixed our Minds and Wills upon God, we do naturally affect such an *Infinity* of Objects, that our Desires are always reaching at *new* Pleasures, and carried forth after *new* Possessions; that our Fancy is always entertaining our Mind with *new* Ideas, and our Understanding continually calling for *new* Scenes of Contemplation; by which, as one hath well observed, the Soul declares that it is not to be perfectly pleased with *finite* Truth or Good; which possibly may be the Reason of that Delight we take in Fables, and Pictures of Anticks and Monsters, because they *exceed* the Limits of Truth, and so do *enlarge*, as it were, the Prospect of the Soul, which, by its unconfined Motions, shews that it is of a Divine Extract, and that it can never be perfectly satisfied but in Union with God, who is an infinite Ocean of Truth and Goodness: For as for all other Beings, they are so very *shallow*, that we quickly see (or at least shall do, when we see after the manner of Spirits) to the very Bottom of their Truth and Reality; and when we have done that, they have no more in them to feed and entertain our Understandings. So that when we have exhausted the Truth of *infinite* Beings, we must either cease to understand any more, which would be to deprive our noblest Faculty of any farther Pleasure, or we must at last fix our Mind upon God, in whom it will find such *infinite* Truth, as will be sufficient to exercise it thro'out all its *infinite* Duration. But unless we do *now* acquaint our Minds with God, by frequent *thinking* and *meditating* upon him, we shall, by degrees, grow such *Strangers* to him, that by that Time we go into the other World, we shall be so far from being *pleased* with contemplating him, that we shall look upon him as an *uncouth* Object, and out of distaste *avert* and turn our Eyes from him: For the Mind of Man must be *familiariz'd* to its Objects, before it will be able to contemplate them with *Pleasure*; and tho the Objects themselves be never so *amiable*, yet while the Mind is *unus'd* to them, its Thoughts will *start* and *fly off* from them, and, without a great deal of Violence, will never be reduced to a *fix'd*

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and *ſerious* Attention to them. So that if we go into Eternity with Minds *unaccuſtom'd* to the Thoughts of God, we ſhall be continually flying away from him, as Bats and Owls do from the Light of the Sun, and never be able to compoſe our *awkward* Thoughts into a fixed Contemplation of his Glory. And when we have thus baniſh'd ourſelves from the only Object that can for ever *bleſs* and *ſatisfy* our Underſtanding, that can keep it in everlaſting *Exerciſe* and *Motion*, and feed its greedy Thoughts eternally with *freſh* and *glorious* diſcoveries, we have utterly loſt one of the ſweeteſt Pleaſures that Human Nature is capable of; and ſo muſt neceſſarily *pine* and *languiſh*, under an eternal Diſcontentedneſs. To prevent which, the Goſpel injoins us to train up our Minds to Divine *Contemplation*, and to be frequently *thinking* and *meditating* upon God; to *mind thoſe Things that are above*, for ſo the Greek Word is to be rendred, *Col.* iii. 1. *To ſanctify the Lord God in our Hearts*, 1 Pet. iii. 15. that is, by entertaining great and worthy Thoughts of him: And therefore the Goſpel is ſet before us as a *Glaſs*, that therein we may *contemplate and behold the Glory of God*, 2 Cor. iii. 18. namely, that Divine Glory which is therein diſcovered and revealed to us; that we may ſet him always before our Minds, and *gather up* our Thoughts about him, and force them to *dwell* and *ſtay* upon him, that ſo they may taſte and reliſh his heavenly Beauties, and pleaſe and ſatisfy themſelves with the View and Contemplation of them: For tho to meditate cloſely upon God, may at firſt be *irkſom* and tedious to our unexperienc'd Minds; yet when by the conſtant Practice of it, we have worn off that *Strangeneſs* towards God, which renders the Thoughts of him ſo *troubleſome* to us, and by frequent Converſes are grown better acquainted with him, we ſhall grow, by degrees, ſo *pleaſed* and *ſatisfied* with the Thoughts of him, that we ſhall not know how to live *without* them; and our Minds at laſt will be touch'd with ſuch a lively Senſe of his attractive Beauties, that we ſhall never be well but while we are with him; ſo that he will become the conſtant Companion of our Thoughts, and the daily Theme of our *Meditations*; and nothing in the World will be ſo *grateful* and *acceptable* to us, as to retire now and then from the World, and converſe with God in holy *Contemplations*. And tho, by reaſon of our preſent *Circumſtances* and *Neceſſities*; there is no Remedy but our Thoughts muſt be often diverted from him, and forced to attend to our ſecular Occaſions; yet, after they have been uſed a while to God, we ſhall find they will never be ſo well pleaſed, nor ſo much at eaſe, as when they are retired from every Thing but God, and compoſed and ſettled into Divine Meditations. So that when we go away into the other World, where we ſhall be removed from thoſe troubleſome *Circumſtances* and *Neceſſities*, which did here ſo often divert our Thoughts from God, our Minds which have been ſo long accuſtomed and habituated to him, will immediately faſten upon him, and entirely devote themſelves to the Contemplation of his Nature and Glory: For our Minds being already ſtrongly *inclined* and *biaſſed* towards God, by thoſe grateful Foretaſtes we have had of him in the Warmths of our Meditation; when we come into the ſtill and quiet Regions of the Bleſſed, where we ſhall immediately have a more cloſe and intimate View of him than ever, all our Thoughts will naturally run towards him, and be ſo captivated with the firſt ſight of his Glory, that we ſhall never be able to look off again, as long as Eternity endures; but *one* View will invite us to *another*, and what we ſee will ſo tranſport and raviſh us, that we ſhall ſtill deſire to ſee farther and farther. And becauſe our finite Mind will never be able fully to comprehend all that is *knowable* in his infinite Being, we ſhall be ſo delighted in every farther Knowledge of him, that we ſhall ſtill deſire to know farther; and that *Deſire*, as faſt as it ſprings, ſhall ſtill be ſatisfied with a farther *Knowledge*, and ſo to eternal Ages, each new Satisfaction ſhall immediately ſpring a new Deſire, and each new Deſire immediately terminate in a new Satisfaction. And now, O happy Mind! what Tongue can expreſs thy Joys

and Raptures! that being thus in conjunction with God, art always filled with glorious Ideas, and compassed round with the Wonders of his Perfection; so that at every glance thou seest some new *Charm*, and with every Thought makest some vast *Discovery*. O the transporting Pleasure of that blessed Vision, which now I can hardly think of without an Extasy; when my poor longing Mind, which here gropes about for Truth in a dark Dungeon of Error and Ignorance, shall be let forth into the heavenly Light, to see as it is seen, and know as it is known; how will it fix its greedy Eyes upon God, of whose Acquaintance it is now so desirous! With what infinite delight will its winged and active Thoughts hover in the Light of his Countenance, which, thro' every Moment of Eternity, will be still revealing new Beauties to us, such as will not only for ever *employ*, but for ever *inflame* our Meditations.

II. As we are Rational Creatures related to *God*, we are obliged humbly to *Worship* and *Adore* him; that is, that out of a most awful Esteem and profound Reverence of his super-excellent Majesty, and boundless Perfections, we should bow down our Souls before him, and address ourselves to him by *Invocation* and *Prayer*, by *Praise* and *Thanksgiving*, as to the All-sufficient, Independent and sole Disposer of every good and perfect Gift; and that in these our Addresses we should outwardly express this our reverential Esteem of him, by such humble Gestures of Body, as are most apt to testify it to others: For all this is but a just and due Acknowledgment of what he is in *Himself*, and to *Us*, and all his *Creation*. The profoundest Reverence and Veneration we can pay him, is but a just Acknowledgment of his infinite *Majesty* and *Power*; the most fervent Invocations and Prayers we can offer him, are but a due owning of him to be what he is, the supreme *Disposer* and *Author* of all Things; the most ample and glorious Praises we can give him, are incomparably short of what is owing to his infinite *Excellencies* and *Perfections*; the most thankful Acknowledgments we can make him, are but poor Compositions for those vast Sums which we owe to his *Bounty* and *Liberality*: So that all our Worship is a most just Due arising from what he is in *himself*, and from what he doth to *us*, and to all his *Creatures*. And till we are made thorowly sensible of both, we are utterly incapable of Eternal Happiness; which consisting (as I shewed you before) in the vigorous Exercise of our Rational Faculties upon God, doth necessarily require that we should be duly affected with his Perfections and Actions; for unless we are so, we shall never be able to engage our Faculties vigorously to employ and exercise themselves about him: Unless our Minds be over-awed with an habitual Sense of his infinite Majesty and Power, we shall be apt to neglect him as an Object too mean for our great Faculties to converse with; unless our Minds be strongly disposed to *esteem* and *admire* his Glory and Excellencies, we shall never be able to excite our Understanding and Will to act upon him with any Life and Vigor: In a Word, unless we are possessed with a constant Sense that he is the *Spring* of all those Goods which we enjoy or hope for, we shall be apt to look upon him as one with whom we are very little concerned, and so to neglect and disregard him. So that unless we do now acquire an habitual Devotion of Mind towards God, when we go from hence into the other World, we shall find our Faculties so *averse* and *listless* to all that heavenly Motion and Exercise wherein the Happiness above consists, that we shall be utterly incapable to taste and enjoy it: For in Eternity our Souls will run according to the prevailing Bias which they carry thither with them; but 'tis impossible they should run towards God with *Life* and *Freedom*, unless they are constantly drawn and inclined to him by a devout Veneration of his Majesty, and Admiration of his *Glory* and *Perfection*. And hence it is that the Gospel doth so strictly oblige us to *adore and worship God*, Rev. xxii. 9. *To worship him in Spirit and in Truth*, John iv. 24. *To pray without ceasing*, 1 Thess. v. 17. and *pray always with all Prayer and Supplication*,

plication, that is, earnestly to supplicate God upon every fit Opportunity, and Time of need, *Ephes.* vi. 18. in a Word, *to offer to God the Sacrifice of Praise, that is, the Fruit of our Lips, giving Thanks to his Name*, Heb. xiii. 15. and *to thank God without ceasing*, 1 Theff. ii. 13. The meaning of all which, is, that out of a deep and quick Sense of the infinite Majesty and Power, All-sufficiency and Beneficence of God, we should be frequently bowing ourselves before him, and offering up our Prayers and Praises, and Thanksgivings to him: And in the constant Practice of these, we shall be growing up, by degrees, to that blissful State of Heaven: For all these Acts of Divine Worship being immediate Addresses of our Minds to God, do so unite us to him, that in every hearty Prayer, Praise, or Thanksgiving, we do in a manner touch and feel him: For so while we humbly adore his Majesty, we are sensibly struck with the Rays of it; while we earnestly *invocate* his Goodness and Mercy, we are touched with a strong attractive Virtue from him, whereby we plainly feel ourselves drawn up to him, and rapt into a real Enjoyment of him: In a Word, while we are offering our hearty Praises and Thanksgivings to him, we are under a captivating Sense of his infinite Glory and Beneficence, and with a sensible Touch of this his Heavenly Fire, our Hearts are kindled and inflamed; insomuch, that while we are upon our Knees in a Warmth and Fervor of Devotion, our Minds have many times as *quick* a Perception, as *strong* and *lively* a Relish of God, as ever our bodily Palate had of the most gustful Meats or Liquors. So that by frequently repeating these our Devotions, we frequently repeat these our Sensations of God; which being often renewed, will grow more *vigorous* and *constant*, and so at last emprove into an *active*, *permanent*, and *habitual* Sense of him. And having thus acquired, by our frequent and devout Worship, a *lively*, *constant* Feeling and Perception of the Majesty and Glory, of the Bounty and Benignity of God, whenever we go into Eternity, this, like a vital Spring, will give a *perpetual Motion* to our Faculties, and vigorously exert and employ them upon God for ever: The quick and lively Sense we shall have of his Infinite Majesty and Power will for ever awe our Understandings and Wills into a strict Attention and Submission to him; and have such a commanding Power over us, as will even constrain us to regard him with the profoundest Reverence and Veneration: For there we shall have far greater and clearer Apprehensions of his Majesty, than ever we had in this imperfect State; which will improve our pre-acquired Sense of it to such a degree of Respect and Veneration, as will for ever over-rule our Faculties, and keep our Understandings, Wills and Affections, in close and strict Attendance to him. And as our Sense of his Majesty will sweetly *command*, so our Sense of his infinite Beauty and Beneficence will invincibly *allure* us to exert and exercise our Faculties upon him: For he that hath an affectionate Sense of the Beauty, and Goodness, and Bounty of God, hath a Heart ready tuned for the Musick of Heaven, ready set and composed for Everlasting Praises and Hallelujahs. So that when he goes away from hence into the other World, and is there admitted to a more intimate View of the *Perfections*, and a more abundant Participation of the *Blessings* of God than ever, his pre-disposed Mind will immediately be seized with such a *strong pathetick* Sense of both, as that he will not be able to with-hold expressing and venting it in the most rapturous Strains of Admiration, and Praise, and Thanksgiving: And this will be his Business and Employment for ever, to admire and extol the Perfections of God, of which he will every Moment make new and glorious Discoveries; and to celebrate with grateful Acknowledgments the infinite Riches of his Bounty, of which we will every Moment have fresh and sweet Experiences. So that whilst by continual Acts of Praise and Thanksgiving, we endeavour to affect our Minds with a due Sense of the Goodness and Bounty of God, we are practising before-hand the Musick of Heaven, and taking out the Songs of *Zion*; that so when we go from hence, we may be qualified and

prepared to bear a part in the Celestial Choir: So that true Devotion (you see) which consists in a quick and lively Sense of the infinite Majesty, Beauty and Benignity of God, doth most effectually dispose the Mind to all those Divine and Heavenly Exercises wherein the State of Heaven consists.

III. As we are Rational Creatures related to *God*, we are obliged to an unfeigned *Love of*, and *Complacency in*, him: And that both upon the Account of what he is in *himself*, as he is the most *lovely* and *amiable* of Beings, in whom there is an harmonious Concurrence of all imaginable Beauties and Perfections, of Wisdom and Goodness, and Justice and Mercy, and every other, amiable Thing that can claim or attract a reasonable Affection; all which, in infinite Degrees, are contempered together in his Nature; and also upon the Account of his infinite Kindness and Beneficence to us: For, besides that, he hath compassed us round, like so many *fortunate Islands*, with a vast Ocean of external Blessings, in which there is all that is either *necessary*, *convenient* or *pleasant* for our bodily Use and Enjoyment; besides that, he hath inspired us with immortal Minds, and stamped them with those fair Impresses of his own Divinity, the Knowledge of Truth, and the Love of Goodness, which are both of them very forward Capacities of the highest Perfection, and most exalted Happiness: In a Word, besides that, to supply and gratify these our noble Capacities, he hath prepared for us an immortal Heaven, and furnish'd it with all the Pleasures and Delights that a Heaven-born Mind can desire or enjoy; besides all this, I say, he hath sent his own Son from Heaven to reveal to us the Way thither, and to encourage us to return into it, by dying for our Sins, and thereby obtaining for us a publick Grant and Charter of Mercy and Pardon, upon Condition of our Return; yea, and as if all this were too little, he hath sent his *Spirit* to us, in the room of his Son, to abide amongst us, and as his *Vice-gerent*, to drive on this vast Design of his Love to us, to excite and persuade us to return into that sure Way to Heaven, which he hath described to us, and to assist us all along in our Travel thither: So wondrous careful hath he been, not to be defeated of this his kind Intention to make us everlastingly happy. And now what Heart can be so *hard* and *impenetrable*, as to resist such powerful *Charms* and *Endearments*! Methinks, if we had but the common Sense and Ingenuity of Men in us, it would be impossible for us to reflect upon such Miracles of Beauty and Love, without being intimately *touched* and *affected* with them; but till we are so, it will be impossible for us to enjoy Heaven: For how can we freely exert our Faculties upon an Object that we do not *love*; and if we cannot, how can we, without *loving* God, enjoy Heaven; which consists in the free and chearful Out-goings of all our Faculties upon him? For if when we go into Eternity we *love* him not, either he will be *indifferent*, or *hateful* to us; if the *former*, we shall altogether neglect and take no notice of him; if the *latter*, we shall either fly away from him, and banish our selves from his Presence, or be forced to abide and endure it with extreme Regret and Torment: For whilst our Minds are *averse* and *repugnant* to him, whatsoever we see in him, will but the more enrage and canker our Malice against him; and even the sight of those his glorious Perfections, which so enravish the Hearts of the blessed Inhabitants of Heaven, will only provoke and boil up our Dislike of him to a higher degree of Hatred and Aversation: For so we find by Experience, in this Life, that while our Minds are *unreconciled* to God, it is a *Penance* to us to come near him, to admit any Thoughts of, or Conversation with him. And this is the Reason why we take so much Pains as we do to mis-represent him to ourselves, to draw such Pictures and Ideas of him upon our Minds, as best correspond with our own Tempers, that so having thus transform'd our Notion of him into the Image of ourselves, *Narcissus*-like, we may fall in Love with him, or at least more easily endure his blessed Presence and Conversation. When therefore we shall go into the other World, where all these Disguises of the Divine Idea shall be

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taken off, and *we shall see him as he is*, circled about with his own Rays of unstained and immaculate Glory, we shall never be able to *abide him*; but being all *affrighted* and *confounded* at the Glory of his Presence, we shall be forced to *run away*, and, if possible, to *hide* ourselves from him in everlasting *Darkness* and *Despair*: For our Wills being poison'd and infected with an habitual *Enmity* against him, it must needs be torment to us to *see him*, because we must always see him *happy*; which is so great an *Eye-sore* to those damned Spirits that hate him, that I am apt to think, that next to being delivered out of their own *Misery*, the chiefest Good they desire or wish for, is to be delivered from the tormenting Sense of his *Happiness*: For what greater Torment can our Mind endure, than to be an everlasting Spectator of the Bliss and Happiness of one whom it hates? How then will it fret and gall our *meagre* and *envious* Spirits, to see that Blessed Being, whom we cannot endure, surrounded with an infinite Happiness; with a Happiness so *vast*, as that it can admit of no *Increase*, and yet so *secure*, as that it can never suffer a *Diminution*? So that 'tis impossible, you see, for the Mind of Man to live happily upon God in the other Life, unless it be inspired before-hand, with an hearty *Love* and *Affection* to him.

And hence it is, that our holy Religion doth so strictly require us *to love the Lord our God with all our Heart, with all our Soul, and with all our Mind*, Mat. xxii. 37. *to love him, because he loved us first*; *to delight ourselves in the Lord*, Psal. xxxvii. 4. *and to rejoice in the Lord*, Phil. iii. 1. *and to rejoice in the Lord always*, Phil. iv. 4. *i. e.* to be habitually complacent or well-pleased with the infinite Beauty, Goodness and Perfection of the Divine Nature. Nay, of such vast Import is the Love of God in the Account of the Gospel, that 'tis there recommended as the proper Principle of Christian Life: For so, *Rom.* xiii. 10. we are told, that *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*; that is, the adequate Principle of all Christian Obedience; and *Gal.* v. 6. we are told, that *neither Circumcision nor Uncircumcision availeth any thing in Christ Jesus, but Faith which worketh by Love*; that is, there is nothing of any Account with Christ, but such a Belief of the Gospel, as begets in us a hearty Love to God, and doth thereby work and exert itself, as by that which is the only genuine Principle of Christian Life and Action. 'Tis true, beside this Principle of Love, the Gospel acts us both by our Fear and Hope, exciting the one by Threatnings of the greatest Evils, and animating the other with Promises of the greatest Goods; but yet it is certain, that neither *these*, nor *any other* Principles of Religious Action can be acceptable to God, whilst they are totally separated from Love to him: For there is no Principle of Obedience can be acceptable to God, that is not a Principle of Universal Obedience; but to *love* God, being a great and main Instance of Obedience, that can be no Principle of Universal Obedience, which doth not effectually excite us to *love* him.

'Tis true, the Religion of most Men begins upon the Principles of Hope and Fear, and it cannot be denied but these are good *Beginnings*; but yet till by these we are excited to *love* God, as well as to do the other Parts of our Duty, our Obedience is *lame* and *partial*, and consequently *unacceptable*: So that tho Hope and Fear are good *Ingredients* to compound an acceptable Principle of Obedience, yet, without an *Intermixture* of Love, they are by no means sufficient. There may be, indeed, and at first there generally is, much less of Love in this internal Spring of our Obedience, than of Hope or Fear, whilst yet the whole *Composition* is truly pleasing and acceptable to God: For the lowest Degree of cordial Love intermixed with our Hope and Fear, is sufficient to *leaven* and *consecrate* them into an acceptable Principle of Obedience; but still the less of Love there is in it, the more *weak*, and *languid*, and *imperfect* it is; and in all its Progresses towards Perfection, its *Ripeness* and *Maturity* is to be measured by the Degrees of Love that are in it: And till our Love is arrived to that Degree of Fervour and Ardency, as to become

become the *predominant Motive* and *Maſter-Ingredient* of this our compounded Principle of Obedience, our State in Goodneſs is very *low* and *imperfect*. So that, in ſhort, the Principle that acts and moves us in Religion, is ſtill more and more perfect, the *more* of Love there is in it, and the *leſs* of Hope and Fear; and when Hope and Fear are both ſwallowed up in Love, and this is become the ſole Spring of Action in us, then 'tis the *Principle* of Heaven, the *Soul* that acts and animates the Religion of *juſt Men made perfect*.

So that if ever we deſign to grow up to *their* bleſſed State, we muſt endeavour to *kindle* and *blow up* the Love of God in our Hearts. And in order hereunto, we muſt be frequently repreſenting to our Minds, the infinite Reaſons we have to *love* him, and preſſing ourſelves with the vaſt Obligations he hath laid upon us; ſpreading them fairly before our Thoughts in all their *endearing* Circumſtances: We muſt ever and anon ſet our *cold* and *frozen* Souls before thoſe *melting Flames* of his Love and Beauty, and never leave *chafing* them at 'em, *urging* and *preſſing* them with the Conſideration of them, till we feel the heavenly Fire begin to *kindle* in our Boſoms. And above all Things, we muſt take care, by the conſtant Practice of what is agreeable to God's Nature, to *reconcile* our Minds and Tempers to him; for till this is done, we can never be habitually *pleaſed* or *delighted* in him; but when once, by the Practice of thoſe Eternal Rules of Goodneſs that are founded in his bleſſed Nature, we have ſo far reconciled our Natures to him, as that *our* Hearts and *his* ſtand *bent* the ſame way, and are for the main alike *inclined* and *diſpoſed*, then we are prepared for, and made proper and convenient *Fuel* to receive this heavenly *Flame* of Love to him; and when this is once ſo thorowly *kindled* in our Hearts, as that we are habitually *well-pleaſed* and *delighted* in him, ſo as to *rejoice* in his Happineſs, *acquieſce* in his Will, and *meditate* on his Beauty and Goodneſs, with an unfeigned *Complacency* of Soul, we are then in the ſame State (that is, in Kind, tho not in Degree) with the bleſſed People of Heaven. And tho in this Life we may not be able to raiſe ourſelves to that height of Love as we *deſire*, and much leſs as that bleſſed Object *deſerves*; our preſent Knowledge being *ſhort*, our Thoughts *unſteady*, and our Affections *entangled* in Senſe and ſenſual Things; yet when we go from hence into the other World, and are there admitted to a more intimate View of his Nature, Works and Perfections, our imperfect Love will be immediately improved into an high Seraphick Flame: For now we ſhall not only *know* him better, having him always in our View, and continually ſhining full in our Eyes; but we ſhall be removed from all other Objects that are apt to divert our *Thoughts*, and divide our *Affections* from him. So that now our Love being kindled and fed with the pureſt Light, with the ever out-ſtreaming Rays of the moſt perfect Beauty and Goodneſs, will always exert its utmoſt Vigour, and ſpend itſelf without Decay in one continued everlaſting Rapture!

And then how unconceivably Happy will our State be, when we ſhall always live in *view* of the moſt *lovely* Object, and always *love* him as much as we *are able*, and *be able to love* him a thouſand times more than we can now *imagine*! For the longer we *view*, the more we ſhall *know* him: and the more we *know*, the better we ſhall *love* him; and ſo thro' everlaſting Ages our Love ſhall be *ſtretching* and *extending* itſelf upon this infinite Beauty and Lovelineſs. Now Love is naturally a moſt *ſweet* and *grateful* Paſſion, a Paſſion that *ſooths* and *raviſhes* the Heart, and puts the Spirits into a *briſk* and *generous* Motion: For it wholly conſiſts in a fixed *Complacency* or *Well-pleaſedneſs* of Mind, ariſing from the apprehended Goodneſs and Congruity of the Thing beloved; and it is merely by Accident that it hath any *diſquieting* or *ungrateful* Emotion mingled with it; either the Perſon beloved is *abſent*, which fills it with *unquiet Deſire*; or he is *unhappy*, or *unkind*, which mingles it with *Grief* and *Sorrow*; or he is *fickle* and *unconſtant*, which imbitters it with *Rage* and *Jealouſy*: But conſider it ſeparately from all theſe Accidents, and it is nothing

nothing but pure *Delight* and *Complacency:* But now in Heaven our Love of God will have none of theſe *diſquieting* Accidents attending it; for there he will never be *abſent* from us, but continually entertaining our amorous Minds with the Proſpect of his infinite Beauties; there we ſhall ever *feel* his Love to us in the moſt *ſenſible* and *endearing* Effects, even in the Glory of that Crown which he will ſet upon our Heads, and in the raviſhing Sweetneſs of thoſe Joys he will infuſe into our Hearts; there we ſhall experience the *Continuation* of his Love, in the continued Fruition of all that an everlaſting Heaven means, and be convinced as well by the Perpetuity of his Goodneſs to us, as by the Immutability of his Nature, that he is an *unchangeable* Lover: In a Word, there we ſhall find him a moſt happy Being, *happy* beyond the vaſteſt Wiſhes of our Love; ſo that we ſhall not only *delight* in him as he is infinitely *lovely* and *amiable*, but *rejoice* and *triumph* in him too, as he is infinitely *bleſſed* and *happy*: For Love unites the *Intereſts* as well as the *Hearts* of Lovers, and mutually appropriates to each, each others Joys and Felicities. So that in that bleſſed State we ſhall ſhare in the Felicity of God, proportionably to the Degree of our Love to him: For the more we love him, the more we ſhall ſtill *eſpouſe* his happy Intereſt; and the more we are *intereſted* in his Happineſs, the happier we muſt be, and the more we muſt enjoy of it. Thus Love gives us a real Poſſeſſion and Enjoyment of God; it makes us Co-partners with him in himſelf, and derives his Happineſs upon us, and makes it as really *ours* as *his*: So that God's Happineſs is, as it were, the common *Bank* and Treaſury of all Divine Lovers, in which they have every one a *Share*, and of which, proportionably to the Degrees of their Love to him, they do actually *participate* to all Eternity: And could they but love him as much as he *deſerves*, that is, *infinitely*, they would be as *infinitely* bleſſed and happy as *he*: For then all *his* Happineſs would be *theirs*; and they would have the ſame delightful Senſe and Feeling of it all, as if it were all tranſplanted into their own Boſoms. God therefore being an infinitely *lovely*, infinitely *loving*, and infinitely *happy* Being, when once we are admitted to dwell for ever in his bleſſed Preſence, our Love to him can be productive of none but *ſweet* and *raviſhing* Emotions; for the immenſe Perfections it will then find in its Object, muſt neceſſarily refine it from all thoſe Fears and Jealouſies, Griefs and Diſpleaſures, that are mingled with our *carnal* Loves, and render it a pure *Delight* and *Complacency*: So that when once it is grown up to the Perfection of the heavenly State, 'twill be all Heaven, 'twill be an eternal Paradiſe of Delights within us, a living Spring, whence Rivers of Pleaſures will iſſue for evermore. O bleſſed State, in which my Heart ſhall be brim-full of Love, and my Love ſhall triumph alone with me, and be all Joy and Raviſhment, being removed for ever out of the Noiſe and Neighbourhood of all thoſe diſquieting Affections, which here are wont to mingle with, and continually diſturb and incommode it!

IV. As we are Rational Creatures related to *God*, we are obliged attentively to *imitate* him in all his imitable Perfections and Actions; For this is an allowed Maxim, *Perfectiſſimum in ſuo genere eſt menſura reliquorum*; that is, That which is moſt Perfect in its kind, is to be the Rule and Meaſure of all thoſe Individual Natures that are contained under it: For *Perfection* is the meaſure of *Imperfection*, even as a ſtraight Line is of a crooked; and every Individual of a kind muſt needs be ſo far *defective* in its Nature, as it *falls ſhort* of that which is moſt *perfect* in its kind. God therefore being the moſt Perfect of all in the whole kind of Reaſonable Beings, muſt needs be the Supreme Pattern of all thoſe Individuals that are under him; and ſo far as any of them *diſagree* with him, ſo far they are *defective* in their Natures. Ἀρχέτυπον φύσεως λογικῆς ὁ θεός ἐστι, μίμημα δὲ καὶ ἀπεικόνισμα ἄνθρωπος, *Phil. lib.* 2. *pag.* 132. *i. e.* God is the Archetype of every Reaſonable Nature, and Man is his Imitation and Image: For he is a Being that is infinitely Reaſonable in all his Volitions and Actions, that hath not the leaſt Intermixture

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either of Humour, or Folly, or Prejudice in his Choices; but is always, and in every Thing governed by his own Pure and All-comprehending Wisdom: Upon which Account he ought to be owned and looked upon by every Reasonable Being, as the Sovereign Standard and Pattern of their Natures; and so far as any Reasonable Nature moves or acts *counter* to his, which is the most *perfectly* reasonable, so far it ought to be looked upon as *monstrous* and *unnatural* in its kind: For as it is monstrous in a human Body to have its Parts displaced, its Mouth opened in its Belly, or its Legs growing out of its Shoulders, because these are unnatural Positions, that are directly contrary to the true Idea, Form and Figure of a human Body; so every reasonable Nature that doth not *imitate* and *take after* God's, but chooseth and acts contrary to him, is so far monstrous and mis-shapen, because 'tis *writhed* and *distorted* into a Figure that is directly contrary to its natural Pattern and Exemplar: and while it continues so, it is not capable of true Happiness: For that which renders God so infinitely happy in himself, is not so much the Almighty Power he hath to defend himself from foreign Hurts and Injuries, as the exact Agreement of all his Motions and Actions, with the all-comprehending Reason of his own Mind: For he always sees what is best; and what he sees is best, he always *chooses* and *affects*; and this makes him perfectly satisfied with himself, and fills him with infinite Joy and Complacency; because whenever he surveys himself in the glorious Mirrour of his own Mind, he discerns nothing in himself but what is infinitely *lovely*, nothing but what exactly corresponds with the *fairest Ideas* of his own infinite Reason. Whereas if, upon an impossible Supposal, it were otherwise, there would arise a *Civil War* within his own Bosom, against which *Omnipotence* itself could not *protect* or *defend* him: For in despite of himself he would be continually exposed to the just *Reproaches* of his own Mind; and his own All-seeing Eye would every Moment *detect*, and *libel*, and *upbraid* him, and render him a most *inglorious* Spectacle to himself: So that he would be so far from being infinitely *pleased* and *satisfied* with himself, that his own infallible Reason would be an everlasting *Vexation* to him.

And so will ours be to us, unless we take care to *imitate* God in those his Divine Perfections, from whence his infinite *Self-satisfaction* arises: For so long as we are conscious to ourselves, that we wilfully *swerve* and *deviate* from the great Exemplar of our Rational Natures, we cannot but be *ashamed of* and *condemn* ourselves, and be highly *dissatisfied* with our own Actions: Our Conscience must necessarily *reproach* our Will, and our Reason *upbraid* our base Inclinations. Now what an intolerable Plague is it, for a Man to be forced to make *Invectives* against himself, and continually to carry his own *Satyrs* in his Bosom? In this Life, indeed, what by *disguising* our Faults with specious Names, or *colouring* them over with plausible Pretences; what by *bribing* our Consciences with false Presumptions, or *diverting* ourselves from listning to their Reproaches, by hurrying into Vice or Business, we may happily make a shift to deal well enough with ourselves: But alas! what shall we do when we come into the other World, where all fair Colour and Pretence shall be *wiped off*, and our Vices and We shall appear to ourselves in our own *naked* and *undisguised* Ugliness; where all our false Presumption shall be *baffled* by a woful Experience, and all the Din of worldly Pleasure and Business, in which we were wont to drown the Clamours of our Conscience, shall be for ever *silenced*; so that we shall be exposed without Fence or Guard to the furious Reflections of our own Mind, and lie stark naked under the Lash of an enraged Conscience for ever! O good God! what Tongue can express the intolerable Anguish of such a State, wherein our own Deformities shall be continually objected to our Eyes, and we shall have nothing to palliate or excuse them, but be always forced to *condemn*, and *hate*, and *curse* ourselves for them, and yet not be able to *correct* and *reform* them; wherein we shall still be hurried on to such Actions by our own furious Inclinations, as, when we

we have done them, will *startle* and *amaze* us, set on our Reason and Conscience to *worry* us with their reproachful Reflections, yet in despite of all their Reproaches, we shall still *reiterate* and *repeat* them! Like a desperate Murderer, who having killed an innocent Person, reflects with *Horror* upon his own Act, *tears* his Hair, *beats* his Breast, *curses* and calls himself a thousand Villains: but being hereby chafed into a greater Fury, instead of *reforming*, grows more *mischievous*, and so murders another, and then *rages* afresh; but still the more he *rages*, the more he *murders*. And this will necessarily be our State in the other World, if, thro' our Neglect of *imitating* God, we go away thither under an habitual Contrariety of Nature to him: Besides that we shall be wholly indisposed to those beatifical Acts of Divine Love, Worship and Contemplation, in which, as I have shewed, a great Part of the Pleasure of Heaven consists: For since all Love is founded in Likeness, and Likeness is the Effect of Imitation, how is it possible we should love God, unless we imitate him? and if we do not love him, what Pleasure can we take in contemplating and adoring him?

Wherefore in Prosecution of its great Design, which is to make us happy, the Gospel strictly requires us to be always *imitating*, so far as they are imitable, the Perfections and Actions of our heavenly Father; to endeavour to *form* our Natures to his, to *rectify* the Features and Lineaments of our Souls by his most amiable Idea; to be continually *framing* our Tempers by the noble Pattern of his Mercy and Goodness, his Justice, Purity, and Wisdom; that so being *new-cast*, as it were, in the perfect Mould of his Nature, we may be *transformed* into living Images of him: So *Ephes.* v. 1. *Be ye therefore* μιμηταὶ, *Imitators*, or *Followers of God, as dear Children*; *i.e.* that so you may resemble him in the Qualities of your Minds, as Children do their Parents in the Lineaments of their Bodies. And this is the Sense of all those Evangelical Injunctions, which require us *to be pure, as God is pure*; *merciful, as he is merciful*; and *perfect, as our heavenly Father is perfect*; that is, to take Example by God in the whole Course of our Lives, and trace and follow him in all his imitable Perfections, by *putting on that new, that God-like Man*, that Divine Temper and Disposition, *which, after God*, that is, according to the Pattern of his Nature, *is created in Righteousness and true Holiness*, Ephes. iv. 24. This therefore is an essential Part of our *Christian Life*, to set God always before our Eyes, as the great Pattern of our Lives and Actions, and to endeavour constantly to write after him, and transcribe his Graces into our Natures; that so when we go away into the other World, we may carry with us, at least, a rude and imperfect Draught of his blessed Image upon our Minds, such as, when we are removed from the manifold Impediments of Flesh and Blood, and the perpetual Diversions of this sensible World, and admitted to a nearer View of God, may be a prevailing Bias upon our Wills, and incline us to imitate him for ever: For if for the main we are here transformed, by imitating God, into a *God-like* Temper and Disposition, all those *involuntary Contrarieties* to him, which, by reason of our Ignorance of his Nature, of our Bodily Temper, and the manifold Temptations we are here exposed to, are still remaining in our Natures, will be immediately extinguished, upon our Arrival into the other World; where being freed from all our *Misconceptions* of God, from all the *Repugnancies* of our bodily Temper to him, and from all those *Temptations* that were wont to avert us from him, we shall have no *involuntary* Disposition or Inclination in us; and then our Wills being already predominantly inclined to follow God, and take Example by him, and having no contrary Inclination to contend with, we shall presently *attend to* and *imitate* his Perfections with the greatest Vigor, Freedom, and Alacrity of Soul: So that now we shall be so *intensely* fixed to choose and act like God, who is the Example and Pattern of our Natures, that we shall everlastingly regulate all our Motions by those very eternal Laws of Reason, whereby he everlastingly wills and acts; and there is nothing will be so ab-

horrent to our Natures, as an *ungod-like* Will or Action: For if, as the Apostle tells us, *by beholding now the Glory of God in a Glass, we are changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory*, 2 Cor. iii. 18. then doubtless much more shall we be so, when we behold him *Face to Face*. 'Tis true, as our *Knowledge* of God, who is an infinite *Truth*, can never be *absolutely perfect*, because if it were, it would be an *infinite* Knowledge; so neither can our *Resemblance* of him be, who is an infinite *Goodness*, because; if it were, we should be *infinitely* Good; both which are Contradictions of the State of a Creature; yet as we shall be *knowing* him farther and farther, so proportionably we shall be *imitating* him too thro' infinite Ages of Duration, and still every Act of our Imitation shall be so *attentive* and *vigorous*, that it shall leave a farther Impression of his infinite Perfection on our Natures: So that tho our *finite* Nature can never arrive to a *perfect* Likeness of that infinitely lovely and amiable Being, because it can never be *infinitely* amiable: yet it shall be everlastingly *approaching* nearer and nearer to him, proportionably as it discovers more and more of his infinite Beauty and Amabilities, and be still growing more *wise* and *pure*, more *righteous* and *benign*, according as its Prospect of the *Wisdom*, *Purity*, *Justice* and *Goodness* of his Nature is enlarged and extended: So that as his Beauty shines into us, it will still imprint itself upon us, and transform us into blessed Images of itself; and then, according as we are assimilated to the Divine Nature, we shall still partake of those Joys and Pleasures which are inseparable to it, and resemble it in Bliss as much as we do in Perfection: For as God's *infinite* Perfection is the Spring of his *infinite* Self-satisfaction, so from our *finite* Perfection there shall ever redound to us a Satisfaction equal to our *finite* Capacities: For tho we shall never attain to *absolute* Perfection, that is, to all the *possible Degrees* of Wisdom and Goodness, which is the Peculiar of God; yet to Eternity we shall be *growing on* to it, and in every Period of our Growth we shall be perfectly what we *ought to be*, that is, we shall ever *know* as much of God as is possible for us, our present State and Circumstances considered; and so far as we *know* of him, we shall, to our utmost Power continually *imitate* and *resemble* him. And thus in our Eternal Race to Perfection, our Wills shall always follow our Understanding, and our Understandings shall always follow God with their utmost Vigor and Activity; so that neither the *one* nor the *other* shall ever be deficient of any Degree of Knowledge and Goodness, which *pro hic & nunc* is possible to them.

Now what an unspeakable Satisfaction must this give to the Mind, when surveying itself round about, it shall find every Thing within itself exactly as it *ought to be*; every Faculty to its utmost Power and Capacity, perfectly *corresponding* with its original Pattern and Exemplar; when upon the strictest Scrutiny, it will discover nothing within itself, but what the most *critical* Conscience will be forced to approve of; no Motion or Action, but what will endure the Test of its *severest* Reason: In a Word, when it shall interchangeably turn its Eyes from God to itself, and compare Grace with Grace, and Feature with Feature, and perceive what an amiable Consent and Agreement there is between its own *Copy* and his fair *Original*; what a pure *Imitation* of God its Life is, and how exactly *Deiform* all its Motions and Actions are: when, I say, our blessed Minds shall always find themselves in this *God-like* Posture and Condition, O! what incomparable Content and Satisfaction will they take in themselves! With what enravishing Pleasure will they ever review their own Motions, which being immediately copied from the Nature of God, will be such as its severest Reason will be always forced to commend and approve of! So that now the happy Mind will be always *triumphing* in its own Purity, and enjoy within itself an Everlasting Heaven of Content and Peace; now 'twill continually be *crowned* with the Applauses of its own Reason, and all its Actions will have the joyful *Echoes* of a well-pleased Conscience continually resounding after them. And thus by imitating

God's *Perfections*, we shall imitate his *Happiness* too, and shall for ever *take after* him, not only in respect of the Rectitude of our Natures, but also in the most blessed and comfortable Enjoyment of ourselves: Besides that, our Resemblance of God will everlastingly dispose us to *Love*, and our Love to *contemplate* and *adore* him: For all these blessed Acts do reciprocally further and promote each other; just like contiguous Bodies that are placed in a Circle, the First of which being moved, thrusts on the Second, the Second the Third, the Third the Last, if there be no more between; and then the Last thrusts on the First; and so round again in the same Order: So that if we carry with us into Eternity a Frame and Disposition of Nature like God's, we shall always so *imitate* as still to *love* him, so *love* as still to *contemplate* him, so *contemplate* as still to *adore* him, so *adore* as still to *imitate*, and *love* and *contemplate* him a-new; and in this blessed Circle we shall move round for ever, with unspeakable Vigor and Alacrity.

V. As we are Reasonable Creatures related to *God*, we are bound to *resign up*, and *submit* ourselves to his blessed Will and Disposal: For God hath a just Dominion over all, founded in his own infinite Power, that doth not, like other Dominions, result to him from any external Acts or Atchievements, but is the eternal Prerogative of his own Nature: For he, as well as all other Beings, hath a Freedom to exercise his own Abilities, so far as it is *just* and *lawful*; but being infinitely paramount to all other Powers whatsoever, he can be subject to no *superior* Authority, nor consequently be obliged by any *other* Law, but that of his own Nature: So that whatsoever he *can* do, he can *justly* do, if it be not contrary to the infinite Perfections of his Nature: For his Power being infinite and unconfined, as well as his Wisdom, Justice and Goodness, doth sufficiently warrant him to do whatsoever is consistent with *them*; otherwise he would be infinitely Powerful in vain: And therefore since he *can* exercise a Dominion over All, he must needs have an eternal Right to do it, so far as his own Wisdom, Goodness and Justice will permit, which are the only Laws by which he can be *bounded* in the Exercise of his infinite Power and Ability: So that while he governs us by such Rules and Laws as are convenient to his own Nature, his own Greatness and Power, which exalts him above all other Law or Authority, sufficiently warrants him so to do. And being thus *rightfully* inthroned by the infinite Pre-eminence of his own Power and Majesty, all other Beings, so far as they are capable, stand immutably obliged to *submit* and *resign* themselves up to his Government.

But besides that we are obliged to him as he is *God*, we are also bound to him as he is our *Creator*: For there is always a Power acquired by *Benefits*, where there is none *antecedently*; especially where the Benefit conferr'd is no less than that of our Being, which is the Case between us and God. And this is such a Benefit as is sufficient to intitle him to us, by an *absolute* and *unalienable* Propriety, tho he had no *antecedent* Right of Dominion over us, by Virtue of his own infinite Greatness: So that tho before he created us, or any other Being, he had free Power to act any Thing that lay within the Compass of *just* and *lawful*, which *just* and *lawful* was not definable by any other Law, but that of his own Nature; and tho, since his Creation, his Power is no more, (so that he hath not acquired to himself any new *Power* by creating us, but only made new *Subjects* whereon to exercise that antient Power and Dominion, which was eternally inherent in him) yet doubtless, by giving us our Beings, he hath laid *new* Obligations upon us to obey him: For now *deriving* ourselves, as we do, from him, we are bound by all the Ties of Equity and Justice to *render back* ourselves to him, and to submit those Powers to his Dominion, which are the Effects and Offspring of his Bounty: For what can be more just and equal, than that *that* Will which is the *Cause* of our Beings, should be the *Law* and *Rule* of our Actions; than that we should

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ſerve him with thoſe Powers we derived from him, and render him back the Fruits of his own Plantation? For now we are not *our own*, but *God's*, and He alone hath Power to diſpoſe of us; and whenſoever we diſpoſe of ourſelves contrary to his Will and Pleaſure, we do not only *invade* his Property, but employ the ſpoils of it *againſt* him. And whilſt we continue thus doing, is it poſſible we ſhould ever be happy? For beſides that, while we continue in Rebellion againſt him, we are in an actual Confederacy with Hell; for ſo when we are told, that *Rebellion is as the Sin of Witchcraft*, that is, Rebellion againſt God; the meaning is, that, like Witches, we are in League with the Devil, and are liſted Voluntiers under thoſe infernal Powers, who, for blowing the Trumpet of Rebellion in Heaven, were baniſhed thence Six Thouſand Years ago, and have ever ſince been raiſing Forces in this lower World, againſt God; ſo that whilſt we continue with them in Defiance to God, we are in the Devil's Muſter-Roll, who is Captain-General of all the revolted Legions, and ſo are of the quite oppoſite Party to the Loyal People of Heaven, and conſequently can never hope, while we continue ſuch, to be admitted to their Society and Happineſs; beſides all this, I ſay, Rebellion againſt God, doth naturally draw a Hell of Miſeries after it: For it cannot be ſuppoſed that the Wiſe Sovereign of the World ſhould be ſo unconcerned for his own Authority, as to ſuffer his Creatures to *ſpurn at* and *affront* it, without ever manifeſting his Diſpleaſure againſt them in ſome *dire* and *ſenſible* Effects. And therefore tho in this Life, which is the Time of our Trial and Probation, he mercifully forbears to *lead us to Repentance*; yet if we leave this Life with our Wills *unſubdued* and *unreſigned* to him, we muſt not expect to be thus gently dealt with in the other. For it is as eaſy for him who is the Father of our Spirits, to correct our Spirits, as 'tis for the Parents of our Fleſh to correct our Fleſh. And tho our Souls are no more impreſſible with *material* ſtripes, than Sun-beams are with the blows of a Hammer; yet are they liable to have horrid and diſmal *Thoughts* impreſſed upon them, and to be as much aggrieved by *them*, as ſenſible Bodies are with the moſt exquiſite Torments. So that if God be diſpleaſed with us, there is no doubt but he can *imprint* his Wrath upon our Minds, in black and ghaſtly Thoughts, and cauſe it perpetually to *drop* like burning Sulphur on our Souls. And it being in his Power thus to laſh our Spirits; to be ſure, when once he is implacably incens'd againſt us, (as he will be in the other World, if we go Rebels thither) he will more or leſs let looſe his Power upon us, and make us feel his wrathful Reſentments, by infuſing ſupernatural Horrors into our Souls, and ſcourging our guilty and defenceleſs Spirits with Inſpirations of dire and frightful Thoughts. Now tho this be not a *natural* and *neceſſary* Effect of our Rebellion againſt God, becauſe it depends upon his Will who is a Free Agent; yet conſidering that he is a *wiſe* Agent, and that as ſuch it is neceſſary he ſhould one way or other manifeſt his Diſpleaſure againſt ſuch as are unreclaimable Rebels to his Authority, it is *next* to a natural one; and at leaſt the fearful Expectation of it in ſuch rebellious Spirits (which is a miſery next to the enduring it) is *neceſſary* and *unavoidable*. For God hath imprinted a dread of his own Power and Majeſty ſo deeply on our Natures, that we are not able, with all our Arts of Self-deceit, wholly to *obliterate* and *deface* it; and tho in this Life we may ſometimes *ſuppreſs* and *ſtupify* our Senſe of God; yet even *here*, in ſpite of ourſelves, 'twill ever and anon *return* upon us. And if when we have done what we know is offenſive to that Inviſible Majeſty we ſtand in awe of, we do not ſuffer ourſelves ſeriouſly to *reflect* upon it, there preſently ariſes in our Minds a ſwarm of horrid Thoughts, and *diſmal* Expectations; and if in this preſent State in which we have ſo many Salvo's for our wounded Spirits, ſo many Pleaſures and Self-deluſions to charm our natural dread of God, our over-charged Conſciences do notwithſtanding ſo often *recoil* upon us, and alarm us with ſuch diſmal abodings; what will they do hereafter, when all thoſe Pleaſures are *removed*,

and all those Self-delusions *baffled*, with which we were wont to sooth and divert them. Then doubtless we shall be continually stung with sharp and dire Reflections, and our Consciences, like tragick Scenes, be all hung round with the Ensigns of Horror; then shall the Dread of God perpetually haunt us like a grim Fury, and the terror of his offended Majesty strike us into an everlasting Trembling and Agony. For so St. *James* tells us, that *the Devils themselves do believe and tremble*, Jam. ii. 19. they believe that there is an Almighty Being above them, and are conscious that they are in actual Rebellion against him, which makes them horribly afraid of his Vengeance; and yet such is the inveterate devilishness of their Natures, that they will by no means hearken to a Submission but in despite of their own Dread and Horror, do still persist in an open Defiance to their Almighty Enemy, and so tremble and sin, and sin and tremble for ever. And so shall we, if we go into the other World habitual Rebels to God; our deep and inveterate Malice against him will still hurry us on to *incense* and *provoke* him, and then our natural *Dread* of his Power and Majesty will break into *frightful* and *horrible* Thoughts, and so be continually revenging upon us those our continual Provocations of him: For then our Soul will be nakedly exposed to the lash of its own *furious* Thoughts, and have no shield to defend itself against the terrors of its *guilty* Conscience, which being rouzed up and kept awake by the *unintermitting* sense of our Misery, will be always *clamouring* upon us, and continually *torturing* us with black and horrid Reflections. So that whilst we are wandring among *wretched* Ghosts, thro' those *dismal* shades below, we shall be perpetually meditating *Horrors*, and never leave lashing ourselves with our own *sharp* and *terrible* Thoughts, till we have chafed ourselves into *Furies*, and boiled up our self-condemning Rage into an everlasting Madness. Thus as our sense of our *unlikeness* to God will ever fill us with *Shame* and *Confusion*, so will the sense of our *Rebellion* against him continually strike us into *Fear* and *Amazement*.

To prevent which, our holy Religion, which doth so industriously consult our Happiness, requires us now to *submit ourselves to God*, Jam. iv. 7. *to live to God*, Gal. ii. 19. *to present ourselves living Sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God*, Rom. xii. 1. *to yield ourselves unto God, and our Members as instruments of righteousness unto God*, Rom. vi. 13. The sense of all which, is, that we should endeavour so to affect our Minds with the sense of God's Authority over us, and with the manifold Reasons of our Obedience to him, as to be firmly and constantly resolved within ourselves, neither to *choose* any thing that he *forbids*, nor to *refuse* any thing that he *commands*; that we should set him up a Throne in our Hearts, a *fix'd* and *prevailing* Resolution of Obedience, that therein he may sit and reign, and have the absolute Empire and Command of all our inward Motions, and outward Actions; in a word, that we should acquire such an habitual Respect to, and Reverence of his Sovereign Authority, that no Temptation from *within* or *without* us, may be able to countermand it, or to seduce us from our Duty into any wilful course of Rebellion against him. And when once we have framed our Minds into this obediential Temper, we are in a forward Preparation for Heaven. And tho by reason of those Remains and Reliques of corrupt Nature that are in us, which are here continually excited by the many Temptations among which we live, we may find *reluctant* and *counter-striving* Principles within us; a *stubborn* Appetite contending against an *obedient* Will, and sometimes upon *Surprize* or *Inadvertence* over-powering it; yet if we heartily *bewail* this as our Unhappiness, and if when we thus fall, we *weep* and *rise again*, and take *more* care of our Steps for the future, we shall carry with us when we go from hence into the other World, a Will that is habitually *resigned* to God; and so being there removed from all the Temptations that were wont to excite in us those contrary Appetites and Inclinations, we shall immediately become *all* Duty and Obedience, and freely give up our selves to God, without the least

least shadow of *Contest* or *Reluctancy*. And in this blessed State we shall continue for ever, so *entirely* devoted to God, that between him and us there shall ever be one common Will, and End, and Interest; and our Hearts, which before were in a *great measure* set and tuned to the Heart of God, will be instantly such *perfect Unisons* with it, that whensoever, or whatsoever he speaks, we shall still *resound* and *echo* to him, from our inmost Bowels, with unspeakable Chearfulness and Alacrity.

And being thus reduced to a perfect *Submission* to the Will of God, we shall therein find ourselves incomparably happy: For now our Wills being always determined by the Will of God, we shall be perfectly eased of all the *Trouble* and *Distraction* of Choosing. Now our Minds will no longer hover in *Suspence*, nor be divided between *contrary* Reasons; but all its Thoughts will glide gently on in a calm and even Current, without ever being tossed and bandied to and fro by *cross* and *opposite* Deliberations: For now it no sooner knows the Will of God, but it rests in it immediately with a *free* Assent, and *uncontrouled* Approbation; so that upon *new* Occasions it's free from the trouble of forming *new* Choices and Resolutions, being already fix'd, under all Events, to one *steady* Course of Motion, and *immoveably* resolved, whatever befalls, ever to do what God would have it. And its Will thus perfectly acquiescing in God, as in its proper Place and Element, it will no longer dispute as it was wont to do, no longer waver between two Loadstones, but always obey upon the first Motion, and follow him for ever without Deliberation. In which happy State we shall be no longer ground between those *counter-moving* Milstones, *the Law in our Minds*, and *the Law in our Members*: but being entirely *resigned* to God, we shall ever obey him *secundo flumine*, with a full Current of Inclination, and Nature. And what a mighty Ease must this be to the Soul; especially considering that by being thus entirely subject to God, it will not only be released from the *Trouble* of Choosing and Deliberating, but also thorowly warranted of the *Goodness* and *Rectitude* of its own Choices? For so far as we are subject unto God, *our* Wills are *his*, and so are our Actions too; and whilst they are so, we can have no reason to mistrust, either that they are *bad* in themselves, or that he is *angry* and *displeased* at them. For his Will, we know, is governed by his Nature, which is the *Standard* of Good and Evil, the *Law* and *Measure* of Right or Wrong; so that while we *will* and *act* as he would have us, we have a sufficient warrant for what we do; a warrant that will for ever *bear us out*, and *justify* us to our own Minds, and always render us abundantly *satisfied* with ourselves; so that we shall not only always *acquit*, but always *reverence* our selves; and our Conscience will not only cease to *shame* us, but be continually *applauding* and *smiling* upon us, and instead of those importunate *Clamours*, with which it was wont to entertain us, its constant echo to all our Actions will be, *Well done, good and profitable Servant*. So that being entirely determined by the Will of God, which never varies from the Law of his Nature, we shall be perfectly *satisfied* with ourselves, and for ever *choose* and *act* without the least *Mistrust* or *Hesitance*. And then *our* Wills being perfectly subject to *his*, and all our Powers of Action entirely at his Devotion, we shall never have the least ground to fear or suspect his *Displeasure*, but be always fully satisfied that he *loves* us, that we are *dear* and *precious* in his Eyes, and that to Eternity he will *respect* and *look upon* us with the Smiles of an unchangeable Complacency. The sense of which will ravish our Hearts, and for ever fill us *with joy unspeakable and full of Glory*. So that whereas rebellious Souls are perpetually haunted with two restless Furies, *viz.* the *shame* of their *Guilt*, and the *fear* of their *Danger*, which even here do give them more *disturbancce* than all their Sins can *pleasure* and *delights*; when once we are perfectly *subjected* to God, we shall be for ever discharged of them *both*; and then will our happy Minds be always as *couragious* as Truth, and as *confident* as Innocence it self.

And as by our perfect *Submission* to God, we shall be wholly released from the *trouble* of choosing, and sufficiently warranted in our own *Choices*, so we shall be abundantly *satisfied* both of the Wisdom and Success of them: For then we shall be assured, even by a sweet and happy Experience, that whatsoever God commands us to do, he most certainly knows that it is for our good, and that *that* is the reason why he commands it. So that when we are entirely *subjected* to God; our Choices and Actions will be all directed by an infallible Wisdom to our own good. For while we choose what God would have us, our Wills are guided by God's Wisdom; and so in every genuine Act of Obedience we are as *infallible* as Omniscience itself. When therefore we are perfectly *resigned* to God, we shall always *will* and *act* with as much *Confidence* and *Assurance* of a happy and prosperous Success, as if we ourselves were infinitely wise, and had a perfect comprehension of all possible Issues and Events. And whilst wretched Rebels grope about under the Conduct of their own blind Wills, and for the most part do they know not *what*, and go they know not *where* themselves, but live by *chance*, and act at *random*: our Wills and Actions being wholly steered by an All-wise Will, that never fails to measure them by the best Rules, and point them to the best Ends, we shall be always sure of our hands, and know infallibly before-hand, that every thing we *will* or *do* shall conspire to our own good. And this will enable us to perform the everlasting Race of our Obedience, with an unspeakable Freedom and Alacrity, and always render us wondrous light and nimble, and expedite in our Operations. For whereas when Men know not what may happen upon such an Action, and are not able to pry out all those hidden Events that lurk in the Womb of their own Designs, they always act with *Caution* and *Anxiety*, and are *doubtful* and *tremulous* in their Motions; when once we are sure of a good Event, we still go on with Courage and Chearfulness: and so we shall ever do, when we ever perfectly *will* and *act* under the Command of God. For now we shall always see good Issues before us, and be firmly assured from that infallible Wisdom which governs *his* Will, and by his *ours*, that every thing we Will or Do, shall be crowned with a happy Effect. And this will for ever wing our Souls with an unwearied Vigor and Activity, and render each Act of our Obedience unspeakably *sweet* and *delightful* to us. And now, O blessed Mind! what Tongue or Thought can reach thy Happiness; who living in a most perfect Subjection to an All-good and All-wise Will, art never in the least concerned or troubled to *debate* and *deliberate* what to choose, but dost everlastingly embrace and follow what an infinite Goodness and an infinite Wisdom hath *chosen* for thee!

VI. As we are reasonable Creatures related to *God*, we are also obliged chearfully to *trust in*, and *depend upon* him: For as he is the Prop and Center of all the mouldring Creation, the Almighty *Atlas*, that bears it upon his Shoulders, and keeps it from sinking into Ruin, we and every Creature in Heaven and Earth do hang upon him, and draw our breath from him, and if he shake us off but for a Moment, we presently drop into nothing, and perish: For could we exist of ourselves this *present* Moment, we might as well have done so the Moment *before*, and may as well do so the Moment *after*, and so backwards and forwards to all Eternity; and unless we had such a Fulness of Essence in us, as to exist of ourselves, from all Eternity past, to all Eternity to come, it is impossible we should exist so much as one *Moment* without new supplies from the infinite and independent Fountain of Being. And what can be more fit or reasonable, than that we who are thus born up by him, should freely *trust in*, and *depend upon* him? than that we should build our Hope upon the Prop of our Existence, and make him the Stay of our Confidence, *in whom we live, and move, and have our being*? Especially considering what a proper Object of Trust and Dependence he is; and that not only as he is the Sovereign Disposer of all those Issues and Events which concern us, but also as he is infinitely Wise, and always understands what is

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good or *hurtful* to us, and as he ſtands engaged both by his own *eſſential* Goodneſs, and *free* Promiſe never to fail thoſe that put their Truſt in him; but to manage all their Affairs to their everlaſting Intereſt and Advantage. And in whom can we more rationally *confide*, than in a Being of infinite Wiſdom, Goodneſs, and Power? that always *knows* what is beſt for us, that always *wills* what he *knows* ſo, and always *does* what he *wills*? All which conſidered, it's certainly incomparably more to our Intereſt and Advantage, that our Concerns ſhould lie in his Hands, and be managed as he ſees beſt, than that every thing ſhould happen to us according to our own Will and Deſire: For there are innumerable Things which in the natural Series and Order of Cauſes are *Concomitant* and *Conſequent* to every Event, the greateſt part of which are out of the Sphere of our Cognizance; by reaſon of which it is impoſſible for us to make an infallible Judgment of the *good* or *evil* of any Event that befals us; becauſe tho we may be ſecure that ſuch an Event *ſingly* and *apart* by itſelf may be *good* or *evil* for us; yet for all we know, there may be ſuch Concomitants or Conſequents inſeparable to it, as may quite alter its Nature, and render that *evil*, which conſidered *ſingly* may be good for us; or that *good* which conſidered *ſingly* may be evil. We earneſtly wiſh for ſuch an Event, and are very confident it would be mighty advantagious to us: But alas! if *it* ſhould befal us, according to the Series of Things a thouſand *others* muſt, and what they will prove we are not able to prognoſticate; but for all we know, the Miſchief of *them* may abundantly outweigh the Benefit of *this*. And this being ſo, how extremely unfit are we to make Choices for ourſelves, ſince in moſt Particulars 'tis almoſt an equal lay, whether what we chooſe will prove our *Food* or our *Poiſon*? But now God being the Supreme Orderer and Diſpoſer of Things, and having the *firſt* Link of every Chain of Cauſes in his own Hands, muſt needs have an entire Comprehenſion of all the *intermediate* ones, from the beginning to the end; and his Power being not only the cauſe of all *actual* Events, but alſo of the *poſſibility* of thoſe that ſhall never be actual, he muſt needs diſcern the utmoſt Iſſues and Concomitants of every *poſſible*, as well as of every *future* Event, and *perfectly* underſtand not only what *will* be beneficial or injurious to us, but alſo what *might* be ſo. So that 'tis impoſſible for him to be miſtaken in his Choices, becauſe he knows as well before-hand what Things *would* be to us if they *were*, as what they *are* when they do *actually* exiſt. Upon the whole therefore, 'tis doubtleſs of ineſtimable advantage to us, to be in the Hands of God, and verily, next to Hell itſelf, I know nothing that is more formidable, than for God to let us alone, and give us up to our own Wills and Deſires. And ſhould he call to us from Heaven, and tell us, that he was reſolved to croſs our Deſires no more, but to comply with all our Wiſhes, let the Event prove good or bad, we ſhould have juſt reaſon to look upon ourſelves as the moſt *forlorn* and *abandoned* Creatures on this ſide Hell, as Perſons excluded from the greateſt Bleſſing that belongs to a Creature; and if we had any hope of his re-acceptance of us, it would be infinitely our Intereſt to *reſign* back ourſelves, and all our Concerns to him, and on our bended Knees to beſeech him, above all Things, not to leave us to *ourſelves*, or throw us from *his* Care and Conduct. It being therefore upon all accounts ſo highly fit and reaſonable, and ſo much to our Intereſt and Advantage, that we ſhould freely *truſt* ourſelves, and all our Affairs, into the Hands of God, and *depend* upon him for the good ſucceſs of all our honeſt Endeavours and Undertakings; that we ſhould acquieſce in his Diſpoſal of Things, and under all outward Events be pleaſed and ſatisfied with his Conduct, as knowing that howſoever Things may happen to us, they cannot be otherwiſe than as the wiſe and good God is pleaſed either to permit, or to order and determine them; this, I ſay, being ſo fit in itſelf, and ſo much for our Intereſt, it is impoſſible that without it we can be happy either here or hereafter: For ſince both our Being and Well-being are wholly dependent on the will of God, and

we can neither *be*, nor be *happy* one Moment longer than he pleases, how is it possible we should ever be *quiet*, and *satisfied* in our own Minds, without a great *Assurance* of, and *Confidence* in, him? When we consider what a mighty Stake we have in his Hands, how all our Fortunes lie at his Feet, and how easily he can frown us into *nothing*, or spurn us into a Condition Ten Thousand Times *worse* than nothing, whenever he pleases, how can we be otherwise *secure* in our own Minds, or avoid being externally *anxious* and *solicitous*, but by firmly *relying* on his Truth, and Goodness; to the want of which is to be attributed all that *carking* Care, *tormenting* Fear, and *disquieting* Thoughtfulness, which perpetually haunts the Minds of Men. They are sensible that their Condition is dependent, and that it is not in their own Power either to make it what they would have it, or to secure and continue it when it is made so; they know that by a Thousand Chances, which, in despite of their Foresight or Power, may happen, the next Moment either themselves may be snatch'd from what they possess, or what they possess may be snatched from them; they find that their most probable Designs are liable to innumerable Miscarriages; and that when they have formed their Projects never so wisely, there are infinite cross Accidents may intercur and dash them in pieces: and in this uncertain State of their Affairs, they either think not of God at all, but live at the courtesy of a fickle Chance, and leave themselves to be toss'd and bandied to and fro at the pleasure of a blind and undesigning Fortune, upon whose ever-moving Wheel their wearied Thoughts can never rest; or if they think of God, it is with great *Mistrust* and *Despondency*; they fear he will not be regardful enough of them, nor prove so kind to them as they could wish; and are possess'd with an obstinate Opinion, that 'twould be much better for them to be their own Carvers, than to live at his Disposal and Allowance. And hence proceed all those Anxieties and Discontents, those *fretting* Cares, *dismaying* Fears, *perplexing* and *misgiving* Thoughts, which do continually gall and disquiet them; and from these their thorny Disquietudes, it is impossible they should ever be wholly free, no not in Heaven it self, till they have wrought their Minds to a perfect *Trust* and *Confidence* in God: For we shall be altogether as dependent upon God for our *Heavenly*, as we are for our *Earthly* Happiness; because tho all those Acts of heavenly Virtue, in which our heavenly Happiness consists, will be much *more* in our own Power, than any of these Worldly Goods are; yet they will be no *longer* in our Power than God shall think fit to enable us to choose and act, and to support us in our Being and Existence, which then we shall sensibly perceive entirely depends upon the All-enlivening vigour of his vital Breath. And therefore tho he hath *promised* to continue our being in that most blessed State for ever; yet unless we perfectly *trust* in his Veracity, our Minds will be continually disturbed with anxious and misgiving Thoughts; we shall be afraid lest one Time or other he should forget his Promise, and upon some unknown Reason or Emergency, withdraw from us that influence of his All-upholding Power, upon which our Being and Well-being depends, and let us drop into Nothing. And the *greater* our Happiness is, the *more* we should be afraid of losing it; because we should be always sensible that it entirely depends upon the Pleasure of God, whose Truth and Goodness we cannot perfectly *confide* in. So that were we placed in the midst of Heaven with a *misgiving*, *distrustful* Mind of God, *that* would imbitter all the Joys of it, and give them a harsh and ungrateful Farewel. For the *fearful* Apprehensions we should continually have, of being thrust out of Heaven again, and tumbled headlong from all our Glory, would be such a *continual* Affliction to us, that we should even *pine away* our happy Eternity, for fear of being eternally deprived of it: So impossible it is for any dependent Being to be happy, without an entire *Trust* and *Confidence* in God, upon whom its Being and Happiness depends.

And therefore the Gospel, to render our future Happiness compleat, endeavours to train us up before-hand to a firm and perfect *Confidence* in God, by making it an essential part of our Duty to *commit the keeping of our Souls to God in well-doing*, 1 Pet. iv. 19. *To trust in the living God, who gives us all Things richly to enjoy*, 1 Tim. vi. 17. *Not to trust in ourselves, but in God, who raiseth the dead*, 2 Cor. i. 9. *To believe in God*, and not to be troubled at any Events which happen to us in this World, *John* xiv. 1. and *not to cast away our Confidence*, Heb. x. 35. and the like. The sense of all which is, to press and engage us to a constant and chearful *Reliance* upon God, and to endeavour to affect our Minds with a deep sense of his over-ruling Providence, and a full Assurance of the Goodness of all those great Designs he is driving on in the World; and accordingly to *acquiesce* in, and *embrace* all Events as the Tokens of his Love and Favour, and always to live upon this persuasion, that it is infinitely better for us to be in God's Hands than in our own; and that he knows much better how to dispose of us, and our Affairs than we do; and that he will take care to dispose of them as much to our Advantage as we ourselves should, if *we* knew as much as *he* doth. Now though by reason of those strong Impressions which sensible Things in this Life of Sense make upon us, we should not always be able so firmly to *rely* upon, and *repose* ourselves in God's invisible Power, as not to be at all disquieted about the Issues and Events of Things; yet if by frequent Acts of *Trust* and *Reliance* on him, we have so disposed our Minds to *confide* in him, as that by looking up to his over-ruling Providence, we can *ordinarily* stay and support ourselves, amidst the Changes and Revolutions of this World; if when a storm of Adversity hangs lowring over, or showers down upon us, we can fly to God for shelter, and promise ourselves Safety and Protection under the out-stretched Wings of his Providence: in a word, if when we smart, we can *ordinarily* hope in him, and rest persuaded, that under his gracious Conduct and Disposal, all Things shall work together for our good; this our *imperfect wavering* Hope and Dependance, shall in the other Life be immediately ripened into a most perfect *Confidence* and *Assurance*: For there we shall be wholly removed from this Life of Sense, by which our *Trust* in God's invisible Providence is very much *weakned* and *distracted*; and besides we shall have much *quicker* apprehensions of his Nature, and of the infinite Reasons we have to *confide* in him. And then when after all the threats of a tempestuous Voyage, we shall find ourselves landed in a blessed World, and possessed of all its promised Glories, this mighty *Experiment* of God's Fidelity and Goodness will immediately settle our predisposed Minds, into such an immovable *Confidence* in him, as that from thenceforth no *Fear* or Distrust will ever find the least access to our Thoughts, but we shall be so perfectly assured of his Truth and Goodness, that tho we shall feel ourselves sustained and blest every Moment by the Arbitrary Influences of his Benignity and Power, yet we shall be as *confident* for ever of the continuance of our Bliss, as we could be, if we did *self-exist*, and held the Eternity of our Being and Happiness as independently as God doth his. For tho our Condition will be ever *dependent*, yet 'twill be ever dependent upon such a Foundation as can no more fail than God's own Life and Being; *viz.* upon his Veracity and Goodness, both which are so essential to him, as that he cannot exist without them. And knowing ourselves so firmly secured in this our dependent State, as that we can never sink, unless God himself sink under us, we shall be to all Eternity not only as *safe*, but as *satisfied* in it, as if we were every one a God to himself, and in this blessed Security we shall quietly enjoy God and ourselves for ever. So that our *Trust* and *Confidence* in God will crown the Pleasure of all our other Virtues, by giving us full Security of an everlasting Fruition of it. For now the ravished mind will have no *Fear* or *Distrust* to cramp or arrest it, in its blessed Operations; no *anxious* Thoughts of a sad futurity to sour its present Enjoyments; but 'twill enjoy *all* Heaven every Moment, in a fearless Security of enjoying

it *all* for ever; and when it ſhall perfectly *love, contemplate* and *adore* God, with a ſure and certain *Confidence* of *contemplating, loving* and *adoring* him perfectly for ever, O! how unſpeakably will this inhance the Pleaſure of thoſe Beatifical Acts! For now in every Moment of all our bleſſed Eternity, we ſhall ſtill have the Joy of a bleſſed Eternity to come; and beſides all thoſe Pleaſures, which each preſent Moment of our heavenly Life ſhall abound with, we ſhall ſtill have the Pleaſure of a Proſpect of infinite Ages of Pleaſure. And thus the bleſſed Mind, you ſee, by its perfect *Dependance* upon God, conſummates its own Heaven, and ſecures itſelf for ever in a moſt quiet and undiſturbed Enjoyment of it.

By all which, I think it ſufficiently appears, how much each of theſe *Divine Virtues*, which, as rational Creatures, we are obliged to exert, and exerciſe upon *God*, contributes to our heavenly Happineſs; and conſequently, how indiſpenſibly neceſſary our preſent Practice of them is to *diſpoſe* and *capacitate* us to enjoy it.

SECT. III.

Concerning the Social Virtues, *ſhewing that theſe alſo are included in the heavenly Part of the* Chriſtian Life, *and that in their Natures they very much contribute to our* heavenly Happineſs.

MAN, of all ſublunary Creatures, is the moſt adapted for *Society*: For tho the greateſt Part of other Creatures do *covet* Society, as well as he, yet *he* alone is furniſhed with that Gift of Nature, which renders Society moſt *pleaſant* and *uſeful*, and that is the Gift of *Speech*; by Means of which we can expreſs our Thoughts, and maintain a mutual Intelligence of Minds, with one another; and thereby divert our Sorrows, mingle our Mirth, impart our Secrets, communicate our Counſels, and make mutual Compacts and Agreements to ſupply and aſſiſt each other: And in theſe Things conſiſts the greateſt *Uſe* and *Pleaſure* of Society. And, as of all Creatures, we are the beſt *fitted* for Society, ſo we ſtand in the greateſt *need* of it: For, as for other Creatures, after they come into the World, they are much *ſooner* able to help themſelves than *we*; and after we are moſt able to help ourſelves, there are a World of Neceſſaries and Conveniencies, *without* which we cannot be happy, and *with* which we cannot be ſupplied without each other's Aid and Aſſiſtance; which in an *unſociable* State of Life, we ſhould, of all Creatures in the World, be the moſt indiſpoſed to render to one another: For as *Ariſtotle de Repub. lib.* 1. *p.* 298. hath obſerved, Ὥσπερ γὰρ τελειωθὲν βέλτιστον τῶν ζώων ἄνθρωπός ἐστιν, οὕτω καὶ χωρισθὲν νόμου καὶ δίκης χείριστον πάντων. As Man in his perfect State is the beſt of all Animals; ſo ſeparated from Law and Right, he is the worſt: For out of Society we ſee his Nature preſently degenerates, and inſtead of being inclined to aſſiſt, grows always moſt ſalvage and barbarous to his own kind. Since therefore we have ſo much need of each other's Help, Society is abſolutely neceſſary to cheriſh and preſerve in us our natural Benevolence towards one another, without which, inſtead of being mutually *helpful*, we ſhould be mutually *miſchievous*: For as the ſame Philoſopher hath obſerved, Ὁ δὲ μὴ δυνάμενος κοινωνεῖν, ἢ μηδὲν δεόμενος δι' αὐτάρκειαν, οὐδὲν μέρος πόλεως, ὥστε ἢ θηρίον ἢ Θεός. *Id. Ibid.* He that cannot contract Society with others, or thro' his own Self-ſufficiency, doth not need it, belongs not to any Commonwealth, but is either a wild Beaſt, or a God. We being therefore ſo framed for Society, and under ſuch Neceſſities of entring into it, it hence neceſſarily follows, that being *aſſociated* together, we are are all obliged in our ſeveral Ranks and Stations, ſo to behave ourſelves towards one another, as is moſt for the *Common Good* of All; and that ſince the

the Happiness of each *particular* Member of our Society redounds from the Welfare of the *Whole*, and is involved in it, we ought to esteem nothing good for *ourselves* that is a Nusance to the *Publick*: Because whatsoever *this* suffers, I and every Man suffer; and unless I could be happy *alone*, that can never be for my Interest in *particular*, that is against my Interest in *common*. Now in such a mutual Behaviour, as most conduces to our common Benefit and Happiness, as we are in Society with one another, consists all *Social Virtue*; the proper Use and Design of which is to preserve our Society with one another, and to render it a common Blessing to us all. And hereunto Five Things are necessary, *viz.*

1. That we be *charitably* dispos'd toward one another.

2. That we be *just* and *righteous* in all our Intercourses with each other.

3. That we behave ourselves *peaceably* in our respective States and Relations.

4. That we be very *modest* towards those that are *Superior* to us in our Society, whether it be in Desert or Dignity.

5. That we be very *treatable* and *condescending* to all that are *Inferior* to us. Under these Particulars are comprehended all those *Social Virtues* upon which the Welfare and Happiness of human Society depends. Now that the Practice of all these is included in the *Christian Life*, and doth effectually conduce to our everlasting Happiness, I shall endeavour particularly to prove. And,

I. As Rational Creatures *associated*, and so related to *one another*, we are obliged to be *kindly* and *charitably* dispos'd towards each other: For the End of our Society being mutually to *aid* and *assist* one another; it is necessary, in order hereunto, that we should every one be *kind* and *benevolent* to every one, that so we may be continually inclined mutually to aid and do good Offices to one another. And so far as we fall short of *this*, we fall short of the End of our Society; for, to be sure, the less we *love* one another, the less prone we shall be to *promote* and *further* each other's Welfare, and consequently the less Advantage we shall reap from our mutual Society: But if, instead of *loving*, we *malign* and *hate* each other, our Society will be so far from contributing to our Happiness, that it will be only a Means of rendering us more *miserable*: For it will only furnish us with fairer Opportunities of doing *Mischief* to one another, and that mutual Intercourse we shall have, by being united together in Society, will supply us with greater Means and Occasions to wreak our *Spight* upon each other: For Society, puts us within each other's Reach, and by that Means (if we are Enemies) renders us more *dangerous* to one another; like Two adverse Armies, which when they are at a Distance, can do but little hurt, but when they are joined and mingled, never want Opportunities to destroy and butcher one another: So that *Hatred* and *Malice*, you see, renders our Society a Plague, and we were much better live *apart* poorly and solitarily, and withdraw from one another, as Beasts of Prey do into their separate Dens, than continue in one another's Reach, and be always liable, as we must be while we are in Society, to be *baited* and *worried* by one another.

And as *Hatred* and *Malice* spoils all our Society in *this* Life, and renders it worse than the most dismal Solitude, so it will also in the *other*: For whensoever the Souls of Men do leave their Bodies, they doubtless flock to the Birds of their own Feather, and consort themselves with such separate Spirits, as are of their own Genius and Temper: For, besides that good and bad Spirits are, by the eternal Laws of the other World, distributed into Two *separate* Nations, and there live *apart* from one another, having no other Communication or Intercourse, but what is between Two Hostile Countries, that are continually designing and attempting one against another; so that when wicked Souls do leave this Terrestrial Abode, and pass into Eternity, they are presently incorporated, by the Laws of that invisible State, into the

Nation of wicked Spirits, and confined for ever to their moſt wretched Society and Converſe; beſides this, I ſay, *Likeneſs* doth naturally *congregate* Beings, and incline them to aſſociate with thoſe of their own Kind. Now *Rancour* and *Malice* is the proper Character of the Devil, and the natural Genius of Hell; and conſequently 'tis by a malicious Temper of Mind, that we are *naturalized* before-hand Subjects of the Kingdom of Darkneſs, and qualified for the Converſation of Furies: So that when we go from hence into Eternity, this our *malignant* Genius will render us utterly averſe to the *Friendly* Society of Heaven, and naturally preſs and incline us to conſort with that wretched Nation of *ſpiteful* and *rancorous* Spirits, with whom we are already joined by a Likeneſs and Communion of Natures. But O! much better were it for us to be ſhut up all alone for ever in ſome dark Hole of the World, where we might converſe only with our melancholy Thoughts, and never hear of any other being but ourſelves, than to be continually plagued with ſuch vexatious Company: For tho we, who are Spectators only of *Corporeal* Action, cannot diſcern the manner how one Spirit acts upon another; yet there is no doubt but *Spiritual* Agents can ſtrike us immediately upon Spirits, as *bodily* Agents can upon Bodies; and ſuppoſing that theſe can mutually act upon one another, there is no more doubt, but they can mutually make each other feel each other's *Pleaſures* and *Diſpleaſures*, and that according as they are more or leſs *powerful*, they can, more or leſs, *aggrieve* and *afflict* one another: And if ſo, what can be expected from a Company of *ſpiteful* and *malicious* Spirits joined in Society together, but that their Converſation ſhould be a continual Intercourſe of mutual *Miſchiefs* and *Vexations?* Eſpecially conſidering how they *here* laid the Foundation of an eternal Quarrel againſt one another: For *there* all thoſe Companions in Sin will meet, who by their ill *Counſels*, wicked *Inſinuations*, and bad *Examples*, did mutually contribute to each other's Ruin; and being met in ſuch a *woful* State, how will the tormenting Senſe of thoſe irreparable Injuries they have done each other, whet their *Fury* againſt, and incite them to *play the Devils* with one another? And what can be expected from ſuch a Company of *waſpiſh* Beings, ſo implacably incenſed againſt one another, but that being ſhut up together in the infernal Den, they ſhould be perpetually *hiſſing* at, and *ſtinging* each other? But then beſides thoſe mutual Plagues, which theſe furious Spirits muſt be ſuppoſed to inflict upon one another, they will be alſo nakedly expoſed to the powerful Malice of the *Devils*, thoſe fierce Executioners of God's righteous Vengeance, who, as we now find by Experience, have Power to ſuggeſt *black* and *horrid* Thoughts to us, and to *torture* our Souls with ſuch dreadful Imaginations, as are far more ſharp and exquiſite than any *bodily* Torments: And if *now* they have ſuch Power over us, when God thinks fit to let them looſe, what will they have *hereafter*, when our wretched Spirits ſhall be wholly abandoned to their Mercy, and they ſhall have free Scope to exerciſe their Fury upon us, and glut their *hungry* Malice with our Griefs and Vexations? It ſeems at leaſt a mighty probable Notion, that *that* horrid Agony of our Saviour in the Garden, which cauſed him to ſhriek and groan, and ſweat, as it were, great Drops of Blood, was chiefly the Effect of thoſe *preternatural* Terrors, which the Devils, with whom he was then conteſting, *impreſſed* upon his innocent Mind: And if they had ſo much Power over his *pure* and *mighty* Soul, that was ſo ſtrongly guarded with the moſt *perfect* and *unſpotted* Virtues, what will they have over ours, when we are abandoned to them, and thrown as Preys into their Mouths? With what an Helliſh Rage will they fly upon our *guilty* and *timorous* Souls, in which there is ſo much Tinder for their injected Sparks of Horror to take fire on?

Since therefore *Rancour* and *Malice* doth ſo naturally incline and hurry our Souls towards the wretched Society of Devils and damned Spirits, the Goſpel, which ſo induſtriouſly conſults our Happineſs, takes all poſſible Care to

train us up in *Charity* and mutual *Love*; and makes it a principal, as well as necessary Part of our *Christian Life*, heartily to *love one another*: For this, as our Saviour tells us, is the darling Precept which lay next to his Heart, *this is my Commandment, that ye love one another*, John xv. 12. And accordingly we are bid, not only *to follow after Charity*, 1 Cor. xiv. 1. and *to do all Things with Charity*, 1 Cor. xvi. 14. but also *to put on Charity, above all Things*, Col. iii. 14. and to *dwell in Love*, which the Apostle tells us, is to *dwell in God, who is Love*, 1 John iv. 16. The Intent of all which is, to oblige us to bear an universal *Good-will* to all, and to take an hearty *Complacency* in all that are truly lovely; to be ready to contribute to and rejoyce in every one's *Good* and *Welfare*, and, in a Word, to live in the continual Exercise of all those *charitable* Offices, which our present State and Condition requires and calls for. To be *courteous* and *affable*, and to treat all those we converse with, with an obliging Look, a gentle Deportment, and endearing Language: To be *long-suffering, mild* and *easy to be intreated*; not to break forth into Rage and Storm upon every petty Provocation; and when we are justly provoked, not to suffer our Displeasure to fester into *Malice* and *Rancor*, but to be forward and easy to be reconciled: To be of a *compassionate* and *sympathizing* Temper, and to rejoyce with those that rejoyce, and weep with those that weep: To be *candid* Interpreters of Men and their Actions; to be ready to *mitigate* and *excuse* their Faults, and put *fair* Comments on their Actions; and to be so far from making *malicious* Glosses on their *innocent* Meaning, from *proclaiming* their Miscarriages, and *rejoycing* in their Falls, as not to believe ill of them, but upon undeniable Evidence; and when we are forced to do so, to *pity* and *lament* them, and *endeavour*, and *pray*, and *hope* for their Reformation. In short, to be *benign* and *bountiful* to the necessitous and distressed, and to endeavour, according to our Ability, to allay their Sorrows, remove their Oppressions, support them under their Calamities, and counsel them in their Doubts; to be ready to every good Work, and, like Fields of Spices, to be scattering our Perfumes thro' all the Neighbourhood; and all this out of an *honest* and *sincere* Purpose to promote their Good, and not meerly to acquire to ourselves a popular Vogue and Reputation: All which are essential Parts of that Charity which the Gospel injoins us to exercise towards one another: For so the Apostle assures us, 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5, 6, 7. *Charity suffereth long, and is kind; Charity envieth not; Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no Evil, rejoyceth not in Iniquity, but rejoyceth in the Truth; beareth all Things, believeth all Things, hopeth all Things, endureth all Things.*

Now tho there be several Acts of Charity that will cease for ever in Heaven, such as *long-suffering, giving of Alms*, and *forgiving of Injuries*, and the like; because, among the People of Heaven, there will be none of the Faults or Miseries about which *these* Acts are conversant; yet even the Practice of *these* is indispensably necessary to *temper* and *dispose* our Minds to heavenly Charity, which till we are *disposed to* by universal Love, we shall never be capable of *exercising*; but since all virtuous Dispositions are acquired by Acts, it is impossible we should acquire the Disposition of universal Love, unless we universally practise it. 'Tis by *giving Alms* that we must acquire cordial Charity to the *poor* and *needy*; and by *forgiving Injuries*, that we must dispose ourselves to love those that *offend* us: For these Acts are *Causes* as well as *Signs* of a charitable Temper, and are necessary, not only to *signify it* where it *is*, but also to produce it where it is *not*. When therefore, by acting all those Parts of Charity, which are proper to *this* as well as the *other* State, we have acquired this blessed Disposition of *universal Charity*, our Minds are fairly *framed* and *tempered* for the Society of Heaven. And tho in the perpetual Justle and Tumult of this World, some little *Piques* and *Displeasures* should now and then arise in our Minds, yet, if in the *cool* and *standing* Temper of our Souls, we are hearty Well-wishers to all Men, and hearty

hearty Lovers of all that do in any meaſure *love* and *reſemble* God, we are in a natural Tendency to Heaven, that perfect Element of Love; and when we go from hence, ſhall conſort ourſelves with unſpeakable Joy and Alacrity, with thoſe *great* and *bleſſed* Lovers that inhabit it; who being all of them moſt amiable and God-like Souls, that are every one of the ſame Temper with ourſelves, being touched at the ſame Loadſtone, and made Partakers of the ſame Divine Nature, we ſhall immediately cloſe and join with them in the ſtricteſt Unions of Love: For thoſe heavenly People being all of them moſt *flagrant* Lovers of God, are ſo united in him, who is the common *Center* of Love, that no Saint or Angel can enjoy *his* Love, without poſſeſſing a proportionate Degree of *theirs*; and their Love of one another being all *ſubordinate* to their common Love to God, and *grounded* upon it, tho their ſtrongeſt Inclination, like that of *excited* Needles, be ſtill towards *him* the bleſſed Magnet, at which they have every one been touched, yet do they all *ſtick ſaſt* to one another, being *clung* inſeparably together, by thoſe attractive Virtues, which they have all derived from him: And in this State of perfect *Friendſhip* they converſe together with unſpeakable Pleaſure, and all their Converſation is a perpetual Intercourſe of *wiſe* and *holy* Endearments: And now what a bleſſed Society muſt this be, wherein perfect *Love* and *Friendſhip* reigns, and hath an All-commanding Empire; where every Heart *mingles* with every one; and all like precious Duſts of Gold, are melted together into one ſolid Ingot; where infinite Myriads of bleſſed Spirits, by interchangeably *claſping* and *twining* with one another, are ſo inſeparably *united* and *grown together*, that they are all but one *compounded* Soul; and when, from the higheſt Angel to the loweſt Saint, they are all ſo *tied* together by the Heart-ſtrings, that every one is every one's dear Friend, what inexpreſſible *Content* and *Complacency* muſt they needs take in one another! When I ſhall paſs all Heaven over, thro' Ten Thouſand Millions of bleſſed Beings, and meet none but ſuch as I moſt dearly *love*, and am as dearly *beloved* by. O what unſpeakable Rejoycing and Congratulations will there be between us! Eſpecially when I ſhall find no Defect either of Goodneſs or Happineſs in *them*, nor they in *me*, to damp our mutual Joy and Delight in each other; but every one ſhall be what every one wiſhes him, a *perfect* and a *bleſſed* Friend: For perfect Lovers have all their *Joys* and *Griefs* in common between them; but the Heavenly Lovers having no *Griefs* among them, do only communicate their *Joys* to one another: For where they love ſo perfectly as they do in Heaven, there can be no ſuch Thing as a *private* or *particular* Happineſs, but every one muſt have a ſhare in every one's; and conſequently in this their mutual Communication of Bliſſes, every one's Happineſs will, by his Friendſhip to every one, be multiplied into as many Happineſſes as there are Saints and Angels in Heaven; and ſo every Joy of every Member of the Church Triumphant runs round the whole Body in an eternal *Circulation*: For that bleſſed Body being all compoſed of *conſenting* Hearts, that like perfect Uniſons, are tuned up to the ſame Key, when any one is *touched*, every one *echoes* and *reſounds* the ſame Note; and whilſt they thus mutually *ſtrike* upon each other, and all are affected with *every one's* Joys, it is impoſſible but that in a State where there is nothing but Joy, there ſhould be a continual Conſort of raviſhing Harmony among them: For ſuch is their dear Concern for one another, that every one's Joy not only *pays to*, but *receives* Tribute from every one's; ſo that when any one bleſſed Spirit rejoyces, his Joy goes round the whole Society; and then all their Rejoycings in his Joy *reflow* upon, and *ſwell* and *multiply* it; and ſo as they mutually *borrow* one another's Joys, they always *pay* them back with Intereſt; and by thus *reciprocating*, do everlaſtingly *increaſe* them.

II. As we are rational Creatures, related to *one another*, we are obliged to be *juſt* and *righteous* in all our Intercourſes with each other: To yield to every one whatſoever by any kind of Right, whether *natural* or *acquired*, he can

demand or challenge of us: For there are some Things to which every Man hath a Right by Nature, as he is a Part or Member of Human Society. As for Instance, *Life*, which is the Principle of all our Actions and Perceptions, is freely lent us by God, who is the Source and Fountain of Life; and consequently till God *resumes* his Loan, or we *forfeit* it by our own Actions, we have all a natural Right to *live*; and for any Man to attempt to deprive us of our Life, or of our Means of living, is the highest Injury and Injustice. Again, *Words* being instituted for no other End, but to signify our Meaning, and to be the Instrument of our Intercourse and Society, with one another; every one who is a Member of Human Society, hath a Right to have our Meaning *truly* signified to him by our Words; and whosoever *lyes* or *equivocates* to another, doth injuriously deprive him of the natural Right of Society. Again, a *good name* being the Ground of Trust and Credit, and Credit the main Sinew of Society, till Men have forfeited their good Name, they have a natural Right to be *well-reputed* and *spoken* of; and whosoever either by *false* Witness, *publick* Slander, or *private* Whisperings, endeavours to attaint an innocent Man's Reputation, doth thereby injuriously attempt to exclude him from the Conversation of Men, and shut the Door of Human Society against him. Once more, *Promises* being the great Security of our mutual Intercourse, and Society with one another, every Man that hath a Right to Society, hath a Right to what another *promiseth* him, provided it be but *lawful* and *possible*; and therefore for any Man to promise what he *intends* not to perform, or to go *back* from his Promise, when he lawfully *may* or *can* perform it, is an Act of unjust Rapine; and I may every whit as honestly rob another Man of what is his, *without* my Promise, as of what I have made his *by* it; he having an equal Right to *both*, by the fundamental Laws of Society. In fine, the great Design of our Society being to *help* and *assist* one another; every Man has a Right to be *aided* and *assisted* by every one with whom he hath any Dealing or Intercourse; to have some Share of the Benefit of all that Exchange, Traffick, and Commerce, which passes between him and others; and therefore for any Man in his Dealings with others, to take Advantage from their Necessity or Ignorance, to *oppress* or *over-reach* them, or to deal so *hardly* by them, as either not to allow them any Share of the Profit which accrues from their Dealings, or not a *sufficient* Share for them to subsist and live by, is an injurious Invasion of that natural Right, which the very End and Design of Society gives them: But then, besides these *natural*, there are also acquired Rights; and such are those, which either by *legal* Constitution, or by *mutual* Compacts and Agreements we are seized and vested with; which *Constitutions* and *Compacts* being absolutely necessary to the upholding and regulating of Human Societies, it is no less necessary, that all those Rights which they confer should be inviolably preserved; and whosoever knowingly or wilfully takes away or detains from another what he is thus intitled to by Law or Agreement, is guilty either of a *Fraud* or a *Robbery*, either of which is an unjust Violation of the Rights of Human Society: So that the Practice of *Justice* and *Righteousness*, as it is confined to Human Society, consists in not intrenching either upon the *natural* or *acquired* Rights of those with whom we have any Dealing or Intercourse; in not endeavouring to deprive them either of their *Lives* or *Livelyhoods*, unless by their own Actions they *forfeit* them to us; in imparting our *true* Meaning to them by our Words, and neither *hiding* it under *Lyes and Falshoods*, nor *disguising* it with equivocal *Reservations*; in making good to them all our lawful and possible *Promises*; in not falsely aspersing their *good Names* and *Reputations*, nor suffering them to be *falsely aspersed*, when we are able to vindicate them; in neither using them *cruelly* in our Dealings, so as wilfully to damnify them, nor *hardly*, so as either to take *all* the Advantage to ourselves, or not to allow them such a *competent* Share of it, as is necessary to support and maintain them: In a Word, not to *defraud* or *rob* them of any Thing, which

either by Conſtitution of *Law*, or by *Compact* and *Agreement*, they have a Right to: This is *civil Righteouſneſs*, and without this it is impoſſible that any Society ſhould be *happy:* For how can any one be ſecure in a Society, where *Violence* and *Rapine*, *Falſhood* and *Oppreſſion* reign; where Cauſes are decided, not by Rules of *Juſtice*, but by Dint of *Power*, and the ſtrongeſt Arm is the ſole *Arbitrator* of *Right* and *Wrong*; where *Promiſes* and *Profeſſions* are only *Traps* and *Snares*; and every Man lays *Ambuſhes* in his Words, and lurks behind them in *reſerved* Meanings, only to await an Opportunity to *ſurprize* and *ruin* every one he converſes with? It would, doubtleſs, be far more eligible for Men to *diſperſe* and *diſband* their Society, and live *apart* as Vermin do, and ſubſiſt by *robbing* and *filching* from one another, than live together, as they muſt in ſuch a State of Injuſtice, like Bundles of Briars and Thorns, and out of their mutual Jealouſies and Diſtruſts, be continually *tearing* and *ſcratching* one another.

Now, as I ſhewed you before, what Mens Tempers are *here*, ſuch will their Company be *hereafter:* So that if we go out of *this* World with an *unrighteous* Temper, we muſt expect to be confined in the *other* to an *unrighteous* Society; and if Unrighteouſneſs be ſuch a *Nuſance* to our Society in this Life, what a *Plague* will it be to it in the Life to come? For the moſt *barbarous* Societies of Men in this Life, have ſome *Remains* of Juſtice and Equity among them; and tho the *beſt* of them have many corrupt Members that are bad in the *main*, yet whether it be by their natural Temper, or their Fear of Puniſhment or Diſgrace, or by their Senſe of Honour, or Checks of Conſcience, they are frequently reſtrained from many bad Things, and particularly from *Diſhoneſty* and *Injuſtice*; by which Means their Society is rendred much more tolerable: But in the other Life, as they are all *perfectly* good that are in the Society of the Good, ſo they are all *perfectly* wicked that are in the Society of the Wicked; and whatſoever Checks there may be in their Natures to any *particular* Acts of Wickedneſs, they are there *all* borne down by their inveterate Malice againſt God, and outragious Deſpair of ever being reconciled to him. So that in all their Society with one another, there is not the leaſt Intermixture of *juſt* and *righteous* Intercourſe, but all their Converſation is *Falſhood* and *Treachery*, *Violence* and *Oppreſſion*, and whatſoever elſe is *hurtful* and *injurious* to one another: For the Devil, who is the ſovereign Prince of their Society, is deſcribed in Scripture to be the *Father of Lyes*, and a *Murderer from the Beginning*; that is, a moſt outragiouſly unjuſt and unrighteous Being, one whoſe whole Trade hath been to cheat and deceive, to rook Men of their Happineſs, and mask his murderous Intentions againſt them with diſſembled Smiles, and fawning Endearments, and doubtleſs, *Regis ad exemplum*, is true *there* as well as *here*, the miſerable Vaſſals of his dark Kingdom do all imitate his Manners, and tread in his Footſteps; and if ſo, O good Lord, what *woful* Society muſt they have with one another, when by reaſon of their continual Experience of each other's *Falſhood* and *Inſincerity*, all mutual *Truſt* and *Confidence* is baniſhed from among them, and every one is forced to ſtand upon his own Guard in continual Expectance of *Miſchief* from every one: When all their Life is a Trade of *Diabolical* Knaveries, and their whole Study is to *do* and *retaliate* Injuries; and the main Buſineſs of this their helliſh Society is to *circumvent* and *play the Devils* with one another: Doubtleſs, *this alone*, is enough to make Hell a moſt dreadful State, tho there were *nothing elſe* dreadful in it; and I verily believe, if it were left to my own Option, I ſhould much rather chooſe to languiſh out an Eternity in ſome diſmal Dungeon *alone*, and there converſe only with my own ſilent Griefs, than to dwell for ever in the Garden of the World accompanied with ſuch *falſe* and *villainous* Creatures.

That this therefore may not be our Fate *hereafter*, it is a great Part of the Buſineſs of our Holy Religion, to train us up for better Company, by inuring us *before-hand* to the Practice of *Righteouſneſs* and *Juſtice:* For ſo it obliges us

to do unto Men whatſoever we would that Men ſhould do unto us, Mat. vii. 12. that is, ſo to deal with every Man as if we had exchanged Perſons with him, and he were in our Place, and we in his: And in particular, it enjoins us to be *harmleſs as Doves, as well as wiſe as Serpents,* Mat. x. 16. *to converſe in the World with Simplicity and godly Sincerity,* 2 Cor. i. 12. *to keep up an honeſt Converſation in the World,* 1 Pet. ii. 12. *not to lye to one another,* Col. iii. 9. *not to go beyond or defraud our Brother in any Matter,* 1 Theſ. iv. 6. The Senſe of all which is, to oblige us to maintain a ſtrict *Integrity* in all our Profeſſions and Intercourſes with Men, and not to allow ourſelves in any Courſe of Action, which the Laws of *Juſtice* and *Sincerity* diſapprove; to meaſure our *Words* by our *Meaning,* and our *Meaning* ſo far as we are able, by the *Truth* and *Reality* of Things; to converſe among Men with a generous *Openneſs* and *Freedom,* and with as little *Reſerve* and *Diſguiſe* as is poſſible and prudent, conſidering what a *treacherous* and *ill-natured* World we have to deal with; to *be* what we *ſeem,* and not to paint ill Meanings with ſmiling Looks and ſmooth Pretences; to *notify* our Intentions, and *unfold* our Hearts, and, ſo far as innocent Prudence will admit, to turn ourſelves *inſide-outwards* to all we converſe with; to give to every one his due, and not to intrench upon other Mens Rights, whether it be to their *Lives* or *Liberties, Reputations* or *Eſtates:* In a Word, to weigh to our Neighbours and ourſelves in the ſame Balance, and to do to *them* whatſoever we could reaſonably wiſh they ſhould do to *us,* if *we* were in *their* Perſons and Circumſtances: By the Practice of which excellent Rules, our Mind will, by degrees, be refined and purified from all Diſpoſition to *Fraud* and *Injuſtice*; and then when we go from hence into Eternity, we ſhall carry thither with us ſuch a *juſt* and *righteous* Frame of Mind, ſuch an honeſt *Plainneſs* and *Integrity* of Temper, as will immediately qualify and diſpoſe us for the Society of *juſt Men made perfect,* who finding us already united to them in *Diſpoſition* and *Nature,* will joyfully receive us into their bleſſed Communion. And now, O the bleſſed State we ſhall be in, when being ſtripped of all *Partiality* and *unjuſt Deſire,* of all *Inſincerity* and *Craftineſs* of Temper, we ſhall be admitted into a Nation of *juſt* and *righteous* People, where every one has his appropriate Seat and Manſion of Glory, and is ſo *perfectly contented* with it, that he never *covets* what another enjoys, ſo that every one poſſeſſes what is his own, without the leaſt Suſpicion of being ejected by a *ſubtler* or more *powerful* Neighbour; where being perfectly aſſured of each other's *Integrity,* they converſe together with the greateſt Openneſs and Freedom; and in all their Language, whatſoever it be, do *read* their Hearts, and *convey* their Intentions to one another; where their Souls converſe *Face to Face,* and do freely *unboſom* themſelves to one another, without the leaſt *Diſguiſe* or *Diſſimulation;* ſo that in all their Society, there is no ſuch Thing as a *Secret* or *Myſtery,* but they are all Boſom-Friends to one another, and every one has a Window into every one's Breaſt! O bleſſed God, what a moſt happy Converſation muſt ſuch juſt Souls as theſe enjoy with one another, from whoſe Society all Fraud and Falſhood, Violence and Oppreſſion is for ever baniſhed! For whilſt they live together, as they do, in the continual Exerciſe of perfect *Righteouſneſs* and *Integrity,* they can neither deſign upon, nor ſuſpect one another, and ſo conſequently muſt needs converſe together with infinite Security and Freedom: And being all of them thus inviolably ſafe in each other's *Sincerity* and *Juſtice,* every one enjoys his proper Rank and Degree of Glory, without Fear or Diſturbance, and freely communicates his *wiſe* and *excellent* Thoughts to every one, without any Strangeneſs or Reſerve. Thus all Heaven over there is a moſt perfect *Freedom* of Converſation among thoſe *righteous* People that inhabit it, and every one is every one's *Neighbour,* and every one's Neighbour is as *Himſelf:* For in all their Communication and Intercourſe, they mutually *exchange* Perſons with one another, and there is no one *doth* that to another, which he would not gladly have *done* to himſelf in the ſame Condition and Circum-

ſtances: So that none of them all can poſſibly be aggrieved becauſe they *are* every one dealt by juſt as they *would be*, moſt *fairly*, moſt *righteouſly* and *faithfully.* Aud hence there can be no *Grudges* among them, no *Whiſperings, Backbitings,* or ſpightful *Miſrepreſentations,* becauſe every one likes what every one does, and ſo they are all perfectly ſatisfied with one another. And thus you ſee in the Exerciſe of perfect *Righteouſneſs* and *Integrity* all the Society of Heaven is render'd perfectly *happy.*

III. As we are rational Creatures related to *one another,* we are obliged to behave ourſelves *peaceably* in our reſpective States and Relations. For Society being nothing but an united Multitude, it is indiſpenſibly neceſſary to the preſervation of its Union, that every individual Member of it ſhould *peaceably* comport himſelf towards every one in that Degree and Order wherein he is placed: Becauſe, as the Health of *natural* Bodies depend upon the Harmony and Agreement of their Parts, ſo doth the Proſperity of Societies or *political* ones. For 'tis *Peace* and mutual *Accord* which is the Soul that doth both animate and unite Society, and keep the Parts of it from diſperſing and flying abroad into Atoms, which nothing but Force and Violence can hinder them from, when once they are broken into Diſcords and Diſſenſions. So true is that of our Saviour, *A Kingdom divided againſt itſelf cannot ſtand.* For beſides that Diviſion impairs the ſtrength of a Society, which like an impetuous Stream, being parted into ſeveral Currents, runs with far leſs force, and is much more eaſily forded; for the ſeveral Factions that are in it, are like the ſeveral Nations in a Confederate Army, which tho they be all united into one Body, have ſeveral contrary Intereſts and Deſigns, which divides their Councils, and ſows Jealouſies among them, and ſo renders them not only leſs *able* to withſtand the Force of an unanimous Enemy, but alſo leſs *willing* to aid and aſſiſt one another; beſides this, I ſay, Faction and Diſcord naturally diſ-unites and ſeparates Society, as it diſſolves the Bond of Peace which holds it together. For a Society without Peace is but an aggregated Body, whoſe Parts lie together in a confuſed heap, but have no Joints or Sinews to faſten them to one another; for want of which, inſtead of mutually aſſiſting, they do but mutually load and oppreſs each other; which muſt neceſſarily divide their *Wills* and their *Intereſts,* and when that is done, 'tis only external Force that hinders them from dividing and ſeparating their *Perſons.* Upon this account, therefore, every Man is obliged, as he is a Member of Human Society, to comport himſelf *peaceably* with all Men; becauſe otherwiſe he will neceſſarily render himſelf a Publick Peſt and Nuſance. For ſo long as he is of an *unquiet* and *turbulent* Spirit, inſtead of being an *Help* he muſt neceſſarily be a *Diſeaſe* to every Community, of which he is a Member; and if thoſe, with whom he is joined, were all of his Humour and Spirit, it would be much better for them all to live aſunder in the moſt ſolitary Condition, than to continue in Society together; becauſe inſtead of *helping* and *aſſiſting,* they would be ſure to be continually *vexing* and *plaguing* one another.

If therefore we go into the other World with an *unquiet* and *quarrelſom* Temper, we ſhall be thereby inclined to and prepared for the moſt wretched and miſerable Society, even the Society of thoſe *factious* Fiends, that could not be quiet even in Heaven itſelf, but raiſed a Mutiny before the Throne of God, and for ſo doing were driven thence, and damned to keep one another Company in endleſs Miſery and Deſpair. The Souls of Men therefore being by the Law of the inviſible State always aſſigned to that Society of Spirits whereunto they are moſt con-naturalized in their Temper, we muſt expect, if we go into Eternity with *turbulent* and *contentious* Minds, to be thruſt into the Society of Devils and damned Ghoſts, with whom we are already joined in a ſtrict Communion of Natures. And O! what a *dreadful* thing muſt it be, to be forced to ſpend an Eternity in ſuch *wretched* Company! Verily methinks the moſt horrid and frightful Idea I can form in my own Mind, is,

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that of a Company of *snarling* and *quarrelsome* Spirits, crowded like so many Scorpions and Adders into a Den together, and there forced by the Venomousness of their Temper to live in continual Mutiny, and be perpetually *hissing* and *spitting* Poison at one another. For tho those Words of our Saviour, *Mat.* xii. 25, 26. imply that Satan's Kingdom is *not* divided, yet they are not to be so understood as if there were any such thing as *Peace* or *Concord* among those rancorous Spirits; for that is impossible to be imagined: No, doubtless they would be divided eternally if they could, being such continual Plagues as they are to one another, and think it a mighty Happiness to be shut up all *alone* in separate Dens, where they might never *see* nor *hear* of one another more; but being chained together as they are by an Adamantine Fate, which they cannot withstand, they consent in *this*, and in this *only*, to oppose all good Designs, and do the utmost Mischief they are able. But as to all their other Intercourses they are continually embroiled, and do live in an eternal Variance with one another. So that their Society is like that Monster *Scylla*, whom the Poets talk of, whose inferior Parts were a Company of Dogs, that were perpetually snarling and quarrelling among themselves, and yet were inseparable from one another, as being all of them Parts of the same Substance.

Wherefore since to be united by indissoluble Ligaments to this wretched Society will be the certain Fate of all *factious* and *contentious* Souls, our blessed Religion, whose great Design is to advance our Happiness, hath taken abundant care to educate our Minds in *Quietness* and *Peace*. For hither tend all those Precepts of it which require us to *follow Peace with all Men*, Heb. xii. 14. *to be at Peace among ourselves*, 1 Thess. v. 13. *to follow after the Things that make for Peace*, Rom. xiv. 19. *to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace*, Ephes. iv. 3. *to be of one mind, and to live in Peace*, 2 Cor. xiii. 11. *and if it be possible, and as much as in us lies, to live peaceably with all Men*, Rom. xii. 18. In a word, *to mark them that cause Divisions among us, and avoid them*, Rom. xvi. 17. and to do our Part, *that there be no Divisions among us, but that we be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment*, 1 Cor. i. 10. The Design of all which is to bind us over to the Study and Practice of *Unity* and *Concord*, and restrain us by the strictest Obligations from all *schismatical*, *factious*, and *turbulent* Behaviour in those sacred or civil Societies whereof we are Members. And unless we do sincerely endeavour to fulfil these Obligations, however we may *monopolize* Godliness to our own Party, and *claw* and *canonize* one another, we are Saints of a quite different strain from those blessed ones above, and are acted by the *factious* Spirit of the Devil, whose Business it is to foment Divisions, and kindle Disturbances and Commotions where-ever he comes. This therefore must be our great Care if we design for Heaven, to root out of our Tempers all inclination to *Contention* and *Discord*, and to compose ourselves into a *sedate* and *peaceable*, *calm* and *gentle* frame of Spirit; and not only to avoid all unnecessary Quarrels and Contentions *ourselves*, but so far as in us lies to be Peace-makers between *others*, and preserve a friendly Union *with* and *among* our Fellow-Members. And if thro' human *Frailty* and *Infirmity*, thro' our own *Ignorance* or the plausible *Pretences* of Seducers, thro' the too great Prevalence of our worldly *Interest*, or the Principles of a bad *Education*, it should be our Misfortune to be insensibly *mis-led* into unwarrantable Dissents and Divisions, yet still to keep our Minds in a teachable Temper, and our Ears open to *Truth* and *Conviction*; to be desirous of *Accommodation*, and willing to hear the Reason on *both sides*, and as soon as we are *convinced* of our Error, to *repent* of our Division, and immediately return to *Unity* and *Peace*.

Which if it be our constant Practice and Endeavour, we shall by Degrees form our Minds into such a *peaceable* and *amicable* Temper, that when we go into the other World, where we shall be perfectly disengaged from all temporal Interests, and thorowly convinced of all our erroneous Prejudice, our Souls will

will be effectually contempered to the *quiet* and *peaceable* Society of the Bleſſed; who having no private Intereſts to purſue, no particular Affections to gratify, no Ends or Aims but what are common to them all, which is to *adore*, and imitate, and *love* that never-failing Spring whence all their Felicity flows, it is impoſſible there ſhould be any Occaſion adminiſtred by any of them of any Schiſm or Rupture of Communion. And ſo thoſe happy People live in the moſt perfect Unity and Concord, as being all united in their Ends, and tied together by their Heart-ſtrings. For they having no counter Opinions or croſs Intereſt to divide them, nothing but Truth *ſhining* in their Minds, nothing but Goodneſs *reigning* in their Wills, it is impoſſible there ſhould be any *diſſenting Brother* among them, any *Non-conformiſt* to the bleſſed Laws of their Communion; but conſpiring together as they do in the ſame Mind and Intereſt, and in the ſame peaceable Intentions and Affections, they muſt needs walk hand in hand together, in a moſt perfect *Uniformity*. So that if we would live for *ever* with theſe bleſſed Folk, we muſt now endeavour to *calm* and *compoſe* ourſelves into their Temper, to diſcharge our Minds, as much as we are able, of every *froward* and *contentious* Humour, and reduce our Wills to a perfect loathing of them; that ſo being *qualified* for their Society, we may be *admitted* to it when we go away from this *wrangling* World. And then how unſpeakably happy ſhall we be, when with Minds perfectly refined from all Contention and Bitterneſs, we ſhall be received into the Company of thoſe *calm* and *ſedate* Spirits, and bear our part in their *ſweet* and *placid* Converſation, wherein they freely communicate their Minds to one another, without the leaſt *Fierceneſs* or *Inſolence*, *Captiouſneſs* or *Miſconſtruction*, *Clamour* or *Contention for Victory*; and do eternally diſcourſe over the wiſe Things of Heaven, and ſtill perfectly concenter both in their *Underſtandings* and *Wills*; wherein like ſo many Stars in Conjunction they mingle Light with one another, and do peaceably communicate the Treaſures of their Knowledge without the leaſt bandying or Controverſy: For tho *ſome* of them do doubtleſs know much more than others, yet there being no Intermixture of Error in the Knowledge of *any*, it is impoſſible they ſhould *oppoſe* or *contradict* one another, becauſe whatſoever is true, agrees with every thing that is true. And being thus united in Mind and Judgment, they freely communicate their Thoughts without ever diſputing one another's Sentences, which renders it impoſſible for them ever to *quarrel* or *diſagree*. So that all their Communion is a perfect *Concord* of Souls; wherein there is no ſuch thing as *Schiſm* or *Diviſion*, as paſſing *cruel* Cenſures, or affixing *hard* Names or bandying *Anathema's* at one another; but in Mind and Heart they are all as perfecty *one* as if they were all animated by one and the ſame Soul. And thus they live unſpeakably happy in the mutual Exerciſe of an everlaſting *Peace*, and all their Converſation with one another is perfect *Harmony* without *Diſcords*.

IV. As we are rational Creatures related to *one another*, we are obliged *modeſtly* to ſubmit to our *Superiors*, and chearfully to *condeſcend* to our *Inferiors*; in thoſe reſpective Societies whereof we are Members. Theſe Two I put together, becauſe they are Relatives, and as ſuch do mutually explain and contribute light to each other. Now it being neceſſary to the Order and End of all Societies, that their Members ſhould be diſtinguiſhed into *ſuperior* and *inferior* Ranks and Stations; that ſome ſhould be truſted with the power of *Commanding*, and others reduced to the condition of *Obedience*, that ſo in this regular Subordination they may every one in their ſeveral Stations be obliged to *aid* and *aſſiſt* each other, and according to their ſeveral Capacities to contribute to the good of the *Whole*; which in a ſtate of Equality (wherein every Man would be abſolute Lord of himſelf) cannot be expected, conſidering the different Humours and Intereſts by which Men are acted; this, I ſay, being upon this account neceſſary, it is, upon the ſame account, equally neceſſary that they ſhould mutually perform thoſe Offices to one another,

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which are proper to their respective Ranks and Stations! That Superiors should look upon themselves as *Trustees* for the publick Good, whom God hath invested with Authority over others, not to *domineer* and gratify their own *imperious* Wills, but to *provide* for and *secure* the Commonwealth; and consequently to take care that they do not prostitute their *Power* to their own private *Avarice* or *Ambition*, but that they employ it for the Common Good and Benefit of their Subjects and Inferiors; that they be ready to do them all good Offices, to compassionate their *Infirmities*, consult their *Conveniencies*, and comply with all their reasonable *Supplications*; considering that for this End they derived their Authority from God, who is the Fountain of Authority, to whom they are accountable for their good and bad Administration of it. And so for the Inferiors, it is no less necessary for the Common Good, that they perform their Parts towards those that are above them; that they behave themselves towards them, with all that *Loyalty* and *Modesty*, *Respect* and *Submission*, which their Place and Authority calls for; that they reverence them as the *Vice-gerents* of God, and address to them as to *sacred* Persons, and render a chearful Obedience to that divine Authority that is stampt upon all their *just* Laws and Commands, considering that in their several Degrees, they represent the Person of the great Sovereign of the World, to whom we owe an intire Subjection, and consequently are in every thing to be *obeyed* and *submitted* to, that he hath not expresly *countermanded*. For that Subjects and Superiors should thus behave themselves towards one another is indispensably necessary to the Welfare of all Societies. For whilst the Inferiors of any Society do obstinately refuse to submit to the Will of their Superiors, and the Superiors to condescend to the Common Good of their Inferiors, they are contending together, either for a *Confusion* or a *Tyranny*; and if the Superiors prevail, Tyranny follows; if the Inferiors, Confusion; either of which is extremely mischievous, not only to the Society in general, but to each of the contending Parties: For if *Confusion* follows, 'tis not only the Superior Party suffers by being *deposed* from his Authority, but the Inferior too by being *deprived* of Protection, and exposed to one anothers *Rapine* and *Violence*; and if *Tyranny* follows, 'tis not only the Inferior Party suffers by being forced upon a *rigorous* and *uneasy* Obedience, but the Superior too, by being continually perplexed how to *force* and *extort* that Obedience; and thus both Parties suffer under the bad effects of each others Misdemeanor. So that to make our Society happy, it is necessary, that whether we be Superiors or Inferiors, we should be of a *gentle*, *yielding* and *treatable* Temper, that so which Rank soever we are placed in, we may be *pliable* either way, to a *fair* Condescension, or a *just* Submission. For whilst we are of *obstinate*, *perverse* and *untractable* Tempers, we are neither fit to be Superiors nor Inferiors; but must necessarily be Plagues and Grievances to our Society, which Rank or Order soever we are placed in. And tho in this Life we have not always such a sensible experience of the Evil and Mischief of this *malignant* Temper, because now it is counter-influenced by those more *meek* and *auspicious* ones that are in Conjunction with it; yet when we go into Eternity, we shall be confined to such a Society of Spirits as are all *thro'-out* of our Genius and Temper. For as in the Society of the Blessed there is a Conjunction of every *Virtue* in every Member; so there is of every *Vice* in the Society of the Wicked; who do not only retain those Vices in their Natures, which they were here inclined and addicted to, but are also continually excited to all other Vices they are capable of, by their inveterate Enmity against God, which in that miserable Estate is perpetually enraged, by their Despair of being ever reconciled to him. So that whatsoever wicked Temper we carry with us into Eternity, we shall be sure to meet with it in every individual Member of the Society of the Wicked; and consequently if we carry thither with us a *perverse* and *untreatable* Temper, that will not endure either to *submit* or *condescend*, we shall be sure to find the same Humour

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reigning thro'out all the Society of the Wicked. And then being eternally united to it, (as we must expect to be if we are allied to it by Nature) in what a miserable State shall we be, when every Member of our Society shall be of the same *unconversable* Temper with ourselves, and we shall find none that will *comply with*, or endeavour to *sooth* and *mollify* our Obstinacy; when all our whole Society shall consist of a Company of *stiff* and *stubborn* Spirits, that will neither *submit to*, nor *bear with* one another, but every one will have his will upon every one, so far as he is able to force and extort it; when those that are superior in Might and Power, do all rule with a *fierce* and *tyrannical* Will, and will *condescend* to nothing that is beneficial for their Subjects; and those that are inferior do obey with a *perverse* and *stubborn* Heart, and will submit to nothing but what they are *forced* and *compelled* to, and 'tis nothing but mere Power and Dread by which they *rule* and are *ruled*: In a word, when they all mutually *hate* and *abominate* each other, and those that *command* are a Company of *cruel* and *imperious* Devils, that impose nothing but Grievances and Plagues, and those that *obey* are a Company of *surly* and *untractable* Slaves, that submit to nothing but what they are *driven to* by Plagues; so that *Plagues* and *Grievances*, are both the Matter and the Motive of all their Obedience and Subjection; when this, I say, is the State of their Society with one another, how is it possible but that they should be all of them in a most *wretched* and *miserable* Condition? For where all is transacted by *Force* and *Compulsion* (as to be sure all is among such a Company of *perverse* and *self-willed* Spirits,) there every one must be supposed to be, so far as he is able, a Fury and a Devil to every one; and those that *do compel* are like so many salvage Tyrants, continually vexed and enraged with *stubborn* Oppositions and Resistances, and those that *are compelled*, like so many obstinate Gally-Slaves, are continually *lashed* into an insufferable Obedience, and forced by *one* Torment to submit to *another*; and thus all their Society with one another is a perpetual Intercourse of mutual *Outrage* and *Violence*.

This being therefore the miserable Fate and Issue of a *perverse* and *stubborn*, and *untractable* Temper, the Gospel, whose great Design is to direct us to our Happiness, doth industriously endeavour to root it out of our Minds, and to plant in its room a *gentle*, *obsequious* and *condescending* Disposition: For hither tend all those Evangelical Precepts, which require us *to become weak to the weak that we may gain them*, 1 Cor. ix. 22. *to bear with their Infirmities*, Rom. xv. 2. *and support them, and be patient towards them*, 1 Thess. v. 14. And on the other hand, *to submit our-selves to our Elders*, 1 Pet. v. 5. *and to those that have the rule over us*, Heb. xiii. 17. *to obey our Magistrates, our Parents, and our Masters, to be subject to Principalities, and not speak evil of Dignities, to honour Kings, and submit to their Laws and Governors*, 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14. In a word, *to honour all Men as they deserve*, 1 Pet. ii. 17. *and to hold good Men in Reputation*, Phil. ii. 19. *and in honour to prefer one another*, Rom. xii. 10. The sense of all which is, to oblige us to treat all Men as becomes us, in the Rank and Station we are placed in; to *honour* those that are our *Superiors*, whether in Place or Virtue; to give that modest Deference to their Judgments, that Reverence to their Persons, that Respect to their Virtues, and Homage to their Desires or Commands, which the degree or kind of their Superiority requires; to *condescend* to those that are our *Inferiors*, and treat them with all that Candour and Ingenuity, Sweetness and Affability, that the respective distances of our State will allow; to consult their Conveniencies, and do them all good Offices, and pity and bear with their Infirmities, so far as they are *safely* and *wisely* tolerable. By the constant Practice of which, our Minds will be gradually cured of all that *perverseness* and *surliness* of Temper, which indisposes us to the respective Duties of our Relations; of all that *Contempt* and *Selfishness* which renders us averse to the proper Duty of Superiors, and of all that *Self-Conceit*, and *Impatience of Command*, which indisposes us to the Duty of Inferiors. And our Wills being once wrought into an easy *Pliableness*, either

to *Submission* or *Condescension*, we are in a forward Preparation of Mind to live under the Government of Heaven, where doubtless, under God the Supreme Lord and Sovereign, there are numberless degrees of Superiority and Inferiority. For some are said to reap *sparingly* and some *abundantly*; some to be Rulers of *Five* Cities, and some of *Ten*; some to be the *least*, and some the *greatest* in the Kingdom of Heaven: all which implies, that in that blessed State, there is a great Variety of degrees of Glory and Advancement. And, indeed, it cannot be otherwise in the Nature of the Thing; for our Happiness consisting in the Perfection of our Natures, the more or less *perfect* we are, the more or less *happy* we must necessarily be; for every farther degree of Goodness we attain to, is a *widening* and *enlargement* of our Souls for farther degrees of Glory and Beatitude. And accordingly when we arrive at Heaven, which is the Element of Beatitude, we shall all be filled according to the *Content* and *Measure* of our Capacities, and drink in more or less of its Rivers of Pleasure, as we are more or less *enlarged* to contain them. So that according as we do more and more improve ourselves in true Goodness, we do naturally make more and more room in our Souls for Heaven, which doth always fill the Vessels of Glory of all sizes, and pour in Happiness upon them till they all overflow and can contain no more. Since therefore they are all of them entirely resigned to, and guided by right Reason, there is no doubt but in these their different degrees of Glory and Dignity, they mutually behave themselves towards one another, as is most *fit* and *becoming*; and that since under God the Head and King of their Society, there is from the highest to the lowest, a most exact and regular Subordination of Members, they do every one perform their Parts and Duties towards every one, in all those different Stations of Glory they are placed in, and consequently do *submit* and *condescend* to each other, according as they are of a *superior* or *inferior* Class and Order. So that if when we go from hence into the other World, we carry along with us a *submissive* and *condescending* Frame of Spirit, we shall be trained up, and pre-disposed to live under the blessed *Hierarchy* of Heaven; to yield a chearful Conformity to the Laws and Customs of it; and to render all the Honours to those *above*, and all the Condescensions to those *beneath* us in Glory, which the Statutes of that Heavenly Regiment do require; in doing whereof we shall all of us enjoy a most unspeakable Content and Felicity. For tho in the Kingdom of Heaven, as well as the Kingdoms of the Earth, there are numberless Degrees of Advancement, and Dignity, and one Star *there*, as well as *here*, differeth from another Star in Glory; yet so *freely* and *chearfully* do they all *condescend* and *submit* to each other, in these their respective differences of Rank and Station, that in the widest distances of their State, and Degrees of Glory, they all maintain the dearest *Intimacies* and *Familiarities* with each other; and neither those that are Superior, are either *envied* for their Height, or *contemned* for their Familiarity, nor those that are Inferior *despised* for their Meanness, or *oppressed* for their Weakness. For in that blessed State, every one being best *pleased* with what best becomes him, it is every one's *joy* to behave himself towards every one as best becomes the Rank and Degree he is placed in; and those that are *above*, do *glory* in condescending to those that are *below* them; and those that are *below*, do *triumph* in submitting to those that are *above* them: and thus in all those differences of Glory and Dignity between them, they alternately *reverence* their Superiors, and *condescend* to their Inferiors, with the same *unforced* Freedom and Alacrity; and so do eternally converse with one another (notwithstanding all their distances) with the greatest *Freedom*, and most endearing *Familiarity*.

And thus I have endeavoured to give you an account of the first sort of *Means*, by which *Heaven* the great *End* of a *Christian* is to be obtained: *viz.* the *proximate* and *immediate* ones, which comprehend the Practice of all those Virtues, which, as *Rational Creatures* related to *God* and *one another*, we stand

eternally

eternally obliged to; and ſhewed how they are all of them eſſential Parts of the *Chriſtian Life*, and how *Heaven* it ſelf conſiſts in the *Perfection* of them.

So that upon the whole, the beſt Definition I can give of the ſtate of Heaven, is this, That it is the *everlaſting*, *perfect* Exerciſe of all thoſe *Human*, *Divine*, and *Social* Virtues, which as *Rational Animals*, related to *God*, and all his *Rational Creation*, we are *indiſpenſibly* and *everlaſtingly* obliged to. And therefore ſince the only natural way, by which we can *acquire* and *perfect* theſe Virtues, is *Uſe* and *Practice*, it hence neceſſarily follows, that the *Practice* of them is the only *direct* and *immediate* Means, by which that *heavenly State* is to be purchaſed and obtained.

SECT. IV.

Wherein for a Concluſion of this Chapter, ſome Motives *and* Conſiderations *are propoſed to perſwade Men to the Practice of theſe* heavenly Virtues.

IT having been largely ſhewed in the foregoing Sections, that the Practice of all thoſe Virtues which are included in the *heavenly* Part of the *Chriſtian Life* tends directly towards the heavenly State, and naturally grows up into it; I ſhall now briefly conclude this Argument with ſome *Motives* to perſwade Men to the Practice of them. And theſe I ſhall deduce,

1. From the *Suitableneſs* of them to our preſent *State* and *Relation*.
2. From the *Dignity*.
3. From the *Freedom*.
4. From the *Pleaſure*.
5. From the *Eaſe*.
6. And Laſtly, from the *Neceſſity* of them.

I. Therefore, let us conſider the *Suitableneſs* of theſe Virtues to our preſent *State* and *Relation*: For in our Baptiſm, wherein we gave up our Names to Chriſt, we became *Denizens* and *Freemen* of Heaven, and were received into a Covenant, that upon Performance of our Part of it, actually intituled us to all its bleſſed *Privileges* and *Immunities*. So that in that ſacred Solemnity of our Initiation into the Chriſtian Covenant, we contracted a ſtrict Alliance with the bleſſed People of Heaven, and became their *Brethren* and *Fellow-Citizens*: For ſo the Apoſtle tells us, *Epheſ.* ii. 19. *Now therefore ye are no more Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Houſhold of God*; and *the Houſhold of God* conſiſts of the whole Congregation of the Saints, whether *militant* upon Earth, or *triumphant* in Heaven. For ſo, *Eph.* iii. 15. it is called *the whole Family of Heaven and Earth*. So that we are Confederates with them in the ſame Covenant, even that by which they hold all the Joys and Glories they are poſſeſſed of; and if we will do as they have done, that is, perform the Conditions of it, we ſhall be Co-habitants with them in the ſame Glory. We are adopted Children of the ſame Father with them, Members of the ſame Family, Co-heirs of the Promiſe of the ſame Glory, Brethren of the ſame Confraternity and Corporation; and all the difference between *them* and *us*, is only this, that we are *abroad*, and they *at home*; we are on *this*, and they on *t'other* ſide *Jordan*; we in the *Acqueſt*, and they in the *Poſſeſſion* of the heavenly *Canaan*; to which we are intituled as well as they, and that by the ſame Grant from the ſupreme Proprietor. So that by calling ourſelves *Chriſtians*, we do in other Words call ourſelves *Brethren*, *Co-heirs*, and *Fellow-Citizens* with the bleſſed Inhabitants of Heaven. And what can be more *ſuitable* to ſuch a Profeſſion than for us to live as they do, and the continued Practice of all theſe *heavenly Virtues*? And what a ſhame will it be for us, that are by Profeſſion their Brethren, not to *copy* and *imitate* their

their Behaviour; that we who are below Stairs in the same House and Family, should abandon ourselves to *Sensuality* and *Devilishness*, whilst our blessed Kindred above are entertaining themselves with those heavenly Pleasures, which result from the perfect Exercise of all *heavenly Virtue*; that we should be *neglecting*, *provoking*, and *blaspheming* God, whilst they are *contemplating*, and *admiring*, *loving* and *praising*, *imitating* and *obeying* him; that we should be *cheating* and *defrauding*, *envying* and *despising*, *maligning* and *embroiling* one another, whilst they are conversing together with the greatest *Freedom* and *Integrity*, with the most obliging *Respects* and *Condescensions*, and in the strictest *Unity* and dearest *Friendship*? What a vile Reproach are our wicked Lives to the Conversation of these our *Fellow-Citizens* above? For while we profess ourselves their *Brethren*, those who understand no better will be prone to suspect that *they* live as *we* do; and how would such a suspicion tempt an honest Heathen to renounce Heaven, as the *Indian* King did, when he was told, that the bloody *Spaniards* went thither; and rather choose to go down to the darkest Hell, than to Heaven that is peopled with such *Diabolical* Company? So that by our *wicked* and *unsaint-like* Lives, we take an effectual Course to bring Heaven itself into disgrace, and to cast such a slander on its blessed Inhabitants, as may justly expose them to the Scorn and Hatred of all those honest Minds that know them no otherwise than by us their *unworthy* and *degenerate* Fellow-Citizens; and could those blessed Spirits look down from their Thrones of Bliss, and see what a Company of *wretched* Christians there are that claim *Kindred* with them, they would doubtless be ashamed of the *Relation*, and count themselves highly dishonoured and disgraced by it, and heartily wish, that we would disown our *Sins* or our *Baptism*, and openly renounce their *Alliance*, or more strictly imitate their *Manners*. And really 'tis a burning shame, that we should profess ourselves Fellow-Citizens with them for no other purpose but to *scandalize* and *reproach* them; and it were heartily to be wished, even for the *Credit* of Heaven, and of our blessed Brethren that inhabit it, that if we will not be so *generous* as to follow their Example, we would at least be so *honest* as to renounce their Kindred, and not claim a Relation to their Family, merely to *shame* and *disgrace* them.

II. Consider the *Honour* and *Dignity* of the heavenly Life: For if we may estimate Actions by the Examples from whence they are copied, as in other Cases we are wont to do, doubtless the most *noble* and *honourable* are such as are copied from the Lives of the glorious Inhabitants of Heaven: For besides that sublime Rank of Dignity whereunto they are advanced, as being the Courtiers and immediate Attendants of the Almighty Sovereign of Heaven and Earth; a Dignity which by how much more it excels that of the greatest Potentate of this World, by so much more it *authorizes* the Examples of those that wear it; besides this, I say, their Examples being the most perfect Copies and Imitations of the Life of God, are thereby render'd not only more *eminent* and *glorious*, but also more *obliging* and *authoritative*. For by following them, we follow God, who is the Standard of all rational Perfection, and who by being the first and best in the whole kind of Rational Entities, is the supreme Rule and Measure of them all. So that in imitating the blessed People above, we imitate those who in *their* Place and Station do live at the same Rate, as the great God doth in *his*, and regulate themselves by the same infallible Reason. We do what God himself would do if he were in *our* Place, and what the Son of God himself did do when he was in *our* Natures; and there is no other difference between *his* Life and *ours*, but what necessarily arises out of our different States and Relations. And what more *glorious* thing can we do, than to live by the Pattern of *their* Lives, who live so exactly by the Pattern of God's? For, the Example of living which those blessed People set us, is the Example of God at *second-hand*; 'tis his most rational Life *transcribed*, so far as it is rationally *imitable*, that is, so far as it is

honourable and *glorious* for a rational Creature to tranſcribe it. For in the State of *finite* Creatures they live in a perfect Conformity to the ſame immutable Reaſon, whereby God regulates himſelf in the State of an *infinite* Creator. So that their Example is an imitation in kind of all thoſe particular Excellencies in him, which they *may* and *ought* to imitate; and 'tis an Imitation in general of that eternal *Decorum* with reſpect to Conditions and States, which he conſtantly obſerves in all his Tranſactions with his Creatures. And as their Example is a perfect Copy of God's, ſo 'tis a Copy fitted in all Particulars for our Uſe and Imitation. For it doth not only deſcribe to us all thoſe particular *Excellencies* in him which are to be imitated by us, but all thoſe particular *Duties* to which that Eternal Law of Equity and Goodneſs by which he governs *himſelf* in *his* State, requires of *us* in *ours*; and ſhews not only wherein we are to imitate him *in kind*, but alſo wherein we are to follow him *in general*, in doing what is moſt fit for us in the State and Relation of *Creatures*, even as he doth what is moſt fit for him in the State and Relation of a God and *Creator*. So that the Example of thoſe Heavenly Inhabitants is the example of God himſelf, exactly fitted and attempered to the State and Condition of Creatures. For juſt as they live, the All-wiſe and All-good God himſelf would live, if he were in their State and Relation. Wherefore by imitating their Heavenly Lives and Manners we do ourſelves the greateſt Right, and do moſt effectually conſult the *Glory* and *Honour* of our own Natures. For whilſt we tread in theirs, we tread in the Footſteps of God, and have his glorious Example to warrant and juſtify our Actions; we behave ourſelves as it becomes the Children of the King of Heaven, and ſo far as it conſiſts with the Condition of Creatures, we live like ſo many Gods in the World; which is doubtleſs the utmoſt height of *Honour* and *Glory* that any rational Ambition can aſpire to. So that methinks had we any Spark of true Gallantry and Bravery of Mind in us, we ſhould deſpiſe all other kinds of Life but *this*, and pity thoſe gilded Bubbles that have nothing to boaſt of but their fine Clothes, and great Eſtates, and empty Titles of Honour; we ſhould look upon all other Dignities as the trifling Play-games of Children in compariſon with *this*, of living like the great Nobility of Heaven, that do all live by the Pattern of the Life of God.

III. Conſider the great *Freedom* and *Liberty* of a Heavenly Life. So long as we live *earthly* and *ſenſual* Lives, our free-born Souls are impriſoned in Senſe, and all their Motions are circumſcribed and bounded within the narrow Sphere of *ſenſitive* Goods and Enjoyments. So that when we would follow our Reaſon, and do as that preſcribes and dictates, we find ourſelves miſerably *hampered* and *intangled*; the Luſts of our Fleſh do hang like gyves ſo *heavily* upon us, that whenever our Reaſon and Conſcience call, we cannot move with any *Freedom*, but are fain to *labour* at every ſtep, and after a few faint eſſays are utterly *tired* under the weight of our *reluctant* Inclinations. So that the good which many Times we would, we do not, the Law in our Minds being counter-voted by the Law in our Members. Our Reaſon and Conſcience tell us, that we ought to *love* God above all, to *adore* and *worſhip* him, and ſurrender up ourſelves to his Command and Diſpoſal; and we are many Times ſtrongly inclined to follow its Dictates and Directions; but, alas! when we come to put them in Execution, we find ſo many pull-backs within us, ſo many *ſtrong* and *ſtubborn* Averſions to our good Inclinations, that we have not the Power to do as we would, or to diſpoſe of ourſelves acording to our own moſt reaſonable Deſires; but like miſerable Slaves that are chained to the Oar, we are fain to row on whitherſoever our imperious Luſts do command us, tho we plainly ſee we are running on a Rock, and invading our own Deſtruction. And as we are not free in this ill ſtate of Life to follow our *Reaſon*, ſo neither are we free to follow our *Luſts*. For as when we would follow our Reaſon, our Luſts *cling about* and *intangle* us; ſo when

when we would follow our Lust, our Reason *clogs* and *restrains* us; and by objecting to us the *Indecency* and *Danger*, the infinite *Turpitude* and *Hazard* of our sinful Courses, lays so many rubs in our way, that we cannot sin with any Freedom, but whithersoever we go we walk like Prisoners with the Shackles of *Shame* and *Fear* on our *Heels*; so that which way soever we turn ourselves, we find that our Power to dispose of ourselves is under a great *Restraint* and *Confinement*, and we can neither get leave of our Lusts to follow our Reason, nor of our Reason to follow our Lusts. For when we attempt the *latter*, our Reason curbs us with *Shame* and *Fear*; and when we endeavour the *former*, our Appetite bridles us with *Dislike* and *Aversation*. In this Extremity, therefore, what is to be done that we may be *free*? Why, the Case is plain; we must resolve to conquer either our Reason or our Lusts; if we conquer our Reason (which we shall find by far the *harder* Task of the Two) we shall acquire the Freedom of *Devils* and *Brutes*, the Freedom to do Mischief, and wallow in the Mire without Shame or Remorse; but if we conquer our Lusts, we acquire the Freedom of *Men*; yea, of *Saints* and of *Angels*; the Freedom to act reasonably without Reluctance or Aversation: and this being much more *easily* to be acquired than the former, I dare appeal to any Man's Reason, which of the Two is in itself most eligible. If therefore we would vindicate our *rational* Freedom, we must resolve to shake off those slavish Fetters, our *brutish* and our *devilish* Appetites, that do so perpetually *turmoil* and *incumber* us in all our virtuous Attempts and rational Operations; we must tie up ourselves from executing their Commands, and serving their wicked Wills and Pleasures, and heartily resolve to act as it becomes us in the Capacity of rational Creatures related to *God* and *one another:* And then, tho *at first* we must expect to find ourselves *confined* and *straitned* by our vicious Aversations, we shall be immediately released from all that *Shame* and *Fear* which did so continually curb us in the Career of our Wickedness; and even our *vicious* Aversation (if we couragiously persist in our *good* Resolution) will grow weaker and weaker, and be every Day less and less cumbersome to us, till it is *totally* extinguished. And then we shall feel ourselves entirely restored into our own Power, and be able, without *Check* or *Controul*, to dispose of ourselves and all our Motions, according as it shall seem to us most *fit* and *reasonable*; then we shall act with the greatest Vigour and Freedom, having no counter-striving Principles to *restrain* or *retard* us, no vicious Aversations on the one side, or guilty Shame or Fear on the other, to *counterpoize* us in our rational Motions; then we shall move without Check or Confinement in a large and noble Sphere; for we shall be pleased with what is *fit*, and *wise*, and *good*, without any Reserve or Exception, and we shall do what we please without any *Lett* or *Hindrance*. So that by engaging ourselves in the *Heavenly Life*, we enter into a state of glorious *Liberty*; and if we constantly persist in it, and do still *prevalently* list to live as becomes us, we shall be more and more free to live as we *list*, till at last we are arrived into a perfect Liberty, wherein we shall live without Restraint or Controul, without Check of Conscience, or Reluctance of Inclination, which are the Two main Bars that *confine* and *straiten* Men in their Operations. If therefore we would ever be *free*, let us immediately come off from our Vicious Courses to the practice of this Divine and Heavenly Life, wherein by degrees, if we couragiously hold on, we shall wear off those Shackles that do so miserably hamper and intangle us; and then we shall be entirely free to do whatsoever our Reason dictates to us; then we shall *run the ways of God's Commandments*, and, like our blessed Brethren above, be all Life and Spirit and Wing, in the discharge of our Duty to him.

IV. Consider the *pleasure* of this *Heavenly Life:* 'Tis true, there is a sort of Pleasure that results from all the Acts of a *sensual* and *earthly* Conversation; but we find by Experience, that though in the Pursuit it strangely *al-*

lures and *inchants* us, yet in the Fruition it always *disappoints* our Expectation, and scarce *performs* in the Enjoyment one half of what it *promised* to our Hopes; and, at the best, 'tis but a *present* and *transient* Satisfaction of our *brutish* Sense, a Satisfaction that *dims* the Light, *sullies* the Beauty, *impairs* the Vigor, and *restrains* the Activity of the Mind; diverting it from *better* Operations, and indisposing it to the Fruition of *purer* Delights; leaving no *comfortable* Relish, or *gladsome* Memory behind it, but oftentimes *going out* in a stink, and *determining* in Bitterness, Regret and Disgrace. But in each Act of this Divine and Celestial Life, there is something of the *Pleasure* of *Heaven*, something of those *Divine* Refreshments and Consolations upon which the good People of Heaven do live: For the greatest Part of their Heaven springs from within their own Bosoms, even from the Conformity of their Souls to the heavenly State, and the sprightful Out-goings of their Minds and Affections towards the heavenly Objects; from their *contemplating* and *loving*, their *praising* and *adoring* the most high God; from their *Imitation* of his Perfections, their *Subjection* to his Will, and *Dependance* on his Veracity; all which Acts, as I have already shewed, have the most *ravishing* Pleasures appendant to them, and are so necessary to the Felicity of Rational Creatures, that the Wit of Man cannot fancy a *rational* Heaven without them: For the Heaven of a *rational* Creature consisting in the most *intense* and *vigorous* Exercise of its *rational* Faculties about the most *suitable* and *convenient* Objects, what Object can be more convenient to such Faculties, than that Almighty Sovereign of Beings, whose *Power* is the Spring of all *Truth*, and whose *Nature* is the Pattern of all *Goodness*? So that without a perfect Union of our Minds, and Wills, and Affections with God, there can be no possible *Idea* of a perfect Heaven of Rational Pleasures; but in this blessed Union lies the very *Soul* and *Quintessence* of Heaven. Since therefore in every Act of every Virtue of the Divine Life, there is, at least, an imperfect Union of the Soul with God, it necessarily follows, that there must be some Degree of the Pleasure of Heaven in every one: So that if we do not experience much greater Joy and Delight in the Acts of this Divine Life, than ever we did in the highest Epicurisms, and Sensualities, 'tis not because there are not much greater in them, but because we never exerted them with that *Sprightliness* and *Vigor*, as we do our sensual Appetites and Perceptions; because we are *clogg'd* in the Exercise of them, either by *false* Principles, or *bodily* Indispositions, or *sinful* Aversations: But if we would take the Pains to *inure* and *accustom* ourselves to these heavenly Acts, we should find, by degrees, they would grow *natural* and easy to us; and our Souls would be so *habituated*, *contempered*, and *disposed* to them, that we should upon all Occasions exert them with great Freedom and Enlargement: And then we should begin to feel and relish the Pleasure of them; then we should perceive a Heaven of Delight springing up from within us, and unfolding it self in each beatifical Act of our heavenly Conversation; then we should find ourselves under the *central* Force of Heaven, most sweetly drawn along and attracted thither by the powerful Magnetism of its Joys and Pleasures; and in every Act of our celestial Behaviour, we should have some Foretaste of the celestial Happiness: So that now we should no longer need external Arguments to convince us of the Truth and Reality of that blessed State; for we should feel it within ourselves, and be able to penetrate into its blessed Mysteries by the Light of an infallible Experience. Now we should have no Occasion to search the *Records* of Heaven to assure ourselves of our Interest in it; for by a most *sensible* Earnest of Heaven within us, we should be as *fully* satisfied of our Title to it, as if one of the winged Messengers of Heaven should come down from thence, and tell us that he saw our Names *inrolled* in the Book of Life: And with this sweet Experience of Heaven within us, we should go on to Heaven with unspeakable Triumph and Alacrity, being tolled all along from Step to Step, with the alluring Relishes of its Joys and Pleasures;

and

and in every vigorous Exercise of every Virtue of the heavenly Life, we should have such lively *Tastes* and *Sensations* of Heaven, as would continually excite us to exercise them more *vigorously*; and still the more *vigorously* we exerted them, the *more* of Heaven we should taste in them; and so the *Vigour* of our Virtue would increase the *Pleasure* of it, and the *Pleasure* of it increase its *Vigour*, till both are perfected and grown up into the blessed State of Heaven. Wherefore as we do love Pleasure, which is the great Invitation to Action, let us be perswaded once for all, to make a thorow Experiment of the *heavenly Life*; and if upon a sufficient Trial, you do not find it the most *pleasant* kind of Life that ever you led, if you do not experience a far more noble Satisfaction in it, than ever you did in all your *studied* and *artificial* Luxuries, I give you leave to brand me for an Impostor.

V. Consider the great *Repose* and *Ease* of a heavenly Life and Conversation. In every *sensual* and *devilish* Course of Life, we find, by Experience, there is a great deal of *Uneasiness* and *Disquiet*: For the Mind is *disturbed*, the Conscience *galled*, the Affections *divided* into opposite Factions, and the whole Soul in a most *diseased* and *restless* Posture. And, indeed, it is no Wonder it should be so, since 'tis in an *unnatural* State and Condition: For whilst 'tis in any unreasonable Course of Action, the very Frame and Constitution of it, as it is a rational Being, suffers an unnatural Violence, and is all *unjointed* and *disordered*. And therefore, as a Body, when its Bones are *out*, is never at rest till they are set again; so a rational Soul, when its Faculties and Powers are *dislocated* and put out of their *natural*, i. e. *rational* Course of Action, is continually *restless* and *disturbed*, and always *tossing* to and fro, *shifting* from one Posture to another, *turning* itself from this to t'other Object and Enjoyment, but finding no Ease or Satisfaction in *any*, till 'tis restored again to its own rational Course of Motion, and that it is to act and move towards God, for whom it was made, and in whom alone it can be happy: And if its Reason were not strangely *dozed* and *stupified* with Sense and sensitive Pleasure, it would doubtless be a thousand times more *restless* and *dissatisfied* in this its preter-natural State than it is; it would feel much more Distraction of Mind, Anguish of Conscience, and Tumult of Affections than 'tis now capable of, amidst the numerous Enjoyments and Diversions of this World: For as a musical Instrument, were it a living Thing, would doubtless be sensible of *Harmony* as its proper State (as a great Author of our own ingeniously discourses) and abhor *Discord* and *Dissonancy*, as a Thing preternatural to it; even so were our Reason but *alive* and *awake* within us, our Souls, which according to their natural Frame, were made *Unison* with God, would be *exquisitely* sensible of those Divine Virtues, wherein its *Consonancy* consists, as of that which is its proper State and native Complexion; and complain as sadly of the *vicious* Distempers of its Faculties, as the Body doth of *Wounds* and *Diseases*; 'twould be perfectly *sick* of every unreasonable Motion, and never be able to *rest* till its *disjointed* Faculties were *rectified*, and all its *disordered* Strings set *in tune* again; which being once effected (as it will *quickly* be in a continued Course of heavenly Action) we shall presently find our Souls disburthened of all those *malignant* Humours that do so perpetually *disease*, *disquiet*, and *disturb* us: For by *relying* upon God, we shall totally quit and discharge ourselves of all those restless Cares and Anxieties, which circle and prick us like a Crown of Thorns; by our hearty *Submission* to his heavenly Will, we shall ease our Consciences of all that Horror, Rage, and Anguish which proceeds from the invenomed Stings of our Guilt; by *loving*, *admiring*, and *adoring* Him, our Affections will be cured of all that Inconsistence and Inordinacy, that render them so *tumultuous* and *disquieting*. And these Things being once accomplished, the *sick* and *restless* Soul will presently find itself in perfect *Health* and *Ease*: For now all her jarring Faculties being tuned to the musical Laws of Reason, there will be a perfect Harmony in her Nature, and she will have no disquieting Principle within

 her;

her; nothing but *calm* and *gentle* Thoughts, *ſoft* and *ſweet* Reflections, *tame* and *manageable* Affections; nothing but what abundantly contributes to her *Repoſe* and *Satisfaction.* So that do but imagine what an Eaſe the Body enjoys, when after a lingering Sickneſs it recovers a ſound Conſtitution, and feels a lively Vigor poſſeſſing every Part, and actuating the Whole; ſuch and much more is the Eaſe and Quiet of the Soul, when, by the diligent Practice of the heavenly Life, it feels itſelf recovered from the languiſhing Sickneſs of a ſenſual and deviliſh Nature: Now ſhe is no more *toſſed* and *agitated* in a ſtormy Sea of reſtleſs Thoughts and guilty Reflections, no more *ſcorched* with Impatience, or *drowned* with Grief, or *ſhook* with Fear, or *bloated* with Pride or Ambition; but all her Affections are reſigned to the bleſſed Empire of a ſpiritual Mind, and cloathed in the Livery of her Reaſon. Now all the War and Conteſt between the Law in her *Members*, and the Law in her *Mind*, is ended in a glorious Victory and happy Peace; and thoſe *divided* Streams, her Will and Conſcience, her Paſſions and her Reaſon, are united in *one Channel*, and flow towards *one* and the ſame *Ocean:* And being thus jointed and knit together by the Ties and Ligaments of Virtue, the Soul is perfectly well and eaſy, and enjoys a moſt ſweet *Repoſe* within itſelf. Wherefore as you value your own Reſt and Eaſe, and would not be endleſly *turmoiled* and *diſquieted*, be perſuaded heartily to engage yourſelves in the Courſe of a heavenly Converſation; and then, tho at firſt you muſt expect to find ſome *Difficulty* in it, by reaſon of its Contrariety to your corrupt Natures, yet if you vigorouſly *perſiſt* in it, you will find the Difficulty will ſoon *wear off*, and then 'twill be *all* Eaſe and Pleaſure: For when our Nature is depraved, either by *Senſuality* or *Deviliſhneſs*, 'tis like a Bone out of joint, full of Pain while it is *out*, and much more painful while it is *ſetting*, but as ſoon as *that* is done, 'tis immediately *well* and *eaſy*.

VI. And Laſtly, Conſider the abſolute *Neceſſity* of this heavenly Life and Converſation: For beſides that, God exacts it of us as an indiſpenſible Condition of our Happineſs, and hath aſſured us, that *if we live after the Fleſh, we ſhall die*, and that *without Holineſs we ſhall never ſee the Lord*; beſides this, I ſay, an heavenly Converſation is in the Nature of the Thing *neceſſary* to qualify us for Heaven; or, as the Apoſtle expreſſes it, *to make us meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light:* For Happineſs being a *relative* Thing, implies, in the very Nature of it, a mutual *Correſpondence* between the *Objects* which preſent us with Happineſs, and the *Faculties* which taſte and enjoy them; and be the Objects never ſo good in themſelves, never ſo pregnant with Pleaſure and Bliſs, yet if they do not *agree* with the Faculties whereunto they are objected, inſtead of *bleſſing*, they will but *afflict* and *torment* them; and if a Man were placed in the midſt of Heaven, among all the *raviſhing* Fruitions with which that bleſſed Place abounds, yet unleſs his Mind and Temper did *ſuit* and agree with them, they would be ſo many *Miſeries* and *Vexations* to him, and he would be *afflicted* even in *Abraham*'s Boſom, and grope for *Heaven* in the midſt of *Paradiſe:* So that ſuppoſing that God were ſo unreaſonably *fond* of the Happineſs of wicked Souls, as to prefer it before the Honour of his Government, and the Purity of his Nature, and the Sanction of his Laws, yet ſtill there is an *invincible* Obſtacle behind, that muſt render their future Felicity *impoſſible:* and that is, that it cannot be without a plain *Contradiction* to the Nature of Things, the Temper of wicked Souls being wholly *repugnant* to all the Felicities of the other World: So that if they were all ſet before them, they would not be able to enjoy them, but muſt be forced to *pine* and *famiſh* amidſt all that Plenty of Delights, there being no Viand in all that Heavenly Entertainment that they would reliſh any Sweetneſs in: And therefore if God ſhould ſo far pardon them, as not to puniſh them himſelf by any immediate Stroke of Vengeance, *that* would be the *utmoſt* Favour that his Omnipotent Goodneſs could do for them whilſt they continued in their Sins; which, notwithſtanding ſuch a Pardon,

would for ever continue them extremely miserable. And what great matter doth a Pardon signify to a Malefactor, that is dying of the Stone or Strangury? He could but have died, tho he had not *been* pardoned, and die he must tho he *be*. And just as little almost would it signify to a depraved Soul to be pardoned and absolved by God, whilst it hath a Disease within that preys upon its Vitals, and hastens it on to a certain Ruin: For it could have been but miserable in the future Life, if it had not been pardoned; and miserable it must be, if it continue wicked, whether it be pardoned or no: For it is not so much the Place as the State that makes either Heaven or Hell; and the State of Heaven and Hell consists in perfect *Holiness* and *Wickedness*; and proportionably as we do improve in either of these, so we do approach towards the *one* State or the *other*: For as Heaven is the Center of all that is *virtuous*, *pure*, and *holy*, and all that is *good*, tends thither by a natural Sympathy: so Hell is the Center of all *Impiety* and *Wickedness*, and all that is *bad* doth naturally press and sink down thither, as towards its proper Place and Element; and should not the Divine Vengeance concern itself to exclude wicked Souls out of Heaven, yet their own Wickedness would do it: For that is a Place of such inaccessible Light and Purity, that no Impurity or Wickedness can approach it, but must of Necessity be beaten off with the dreadful Lightnings of its Glory, and tumbled headlong down as oft as it essays to climb up thither; as on the other hand, should not God by an immediate Vengeance precipitate wicked Souls into Hell, yet their own Wickedness, by the mighty Weight of its own Nature, would inevitably press and sink them down into that miserable Condition. What egregious Nonsense therefore is it, for wicked Men to talk of going to Heaven? Alas! poor Creatures, what would you do there? There are no wanton *Amours* among those heavenly *Lovers*; no Rivers of *Wine* among their Rivers of *Pleasure*, to gratify your unbounded *Sensuality*; no *Parasites* to flatter your lofty *Pride*; no *Miseries* to feed your meagre *Envy*; no *Mischiefs* to tickle your devilish *Revenge*; nothing but *chaste* and *divine*, *pure* and *spiritual* Enjoyments, such as your *brutish* and *devilish* Appetites will eternally *loath* and *nauseate*. Wherefore if we mean to go to Heaven, and to be happy there, we must now endeavour to *dispose* and *attemper* our Minds to it, which is no other way to be done, but by leading a heavenly Life and Conversation; which, by degrees, will *habituate*, and *naturalize* our Souls to the heavenly Virtues, and so *work* and *inlay* them into the Frame and Temper of our Minds, that 'twill be our greatest Pleasure to be *exerting* and *exercising* them: And then our Souls will be *dressed* and *made ready* for Heaven; and when we go from hence to take Possession of its Joys, they will be all so agreeable to our *prepared* Appetites, that we shall presently fall to and feed upon them with infinite Gust and Relish: But till by living a heavenly Life, we have disposed ourselves for Heaven, we utterly are incapable of enjoying it: So that now Things are reduced to this Issue, that either our *Sins* or our *Souls* must die, and we must necessarily shake Hands either with *Heaven* or our *Lusts*. And therefore unless we value eternal Happiness so little, as to exchange it for the *sordid* and *trifling* Pleasures of Sin, and unless we love our *Sins* so well, as to ransom them with the Blood of our Immortal Souls, it concerns us speedily to engage ourselves in this heavenly Life and Conversation: For this is an eternal and immutable Law, That if we will be *wicked*, we must be *miserable*.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Concerning the Militant *or* Warfaring *Part of the Christian Life, by which we are to* acquire *and* perfect *the heavenly Virtues; shewing how effectually all the Duties of it conduce thereunto.*

HAVING, in the former Chapter, given a large Account of the *heavenly Part* of the *Christian Life*, and shewn how *directly* and *immediately* the Practice of all the Virtues that are comprehended in it tends to the heavenly State, and how *naturally* they all grow into eternal Happiness; I shall, in the next Place, endeavour to give some brief Account of that Part of the *Christian Life*, which is purely *Militant*, and which wholly consists of those *Instrumental Duties*, by the Use of which we are to conquer the *Difficulties* of those heavenly Virtues, and to *acquire* and *perfect* them; which Difficulties, as I shewed before, *Chap.* 2. are the inbred *Corruptions* of our own Nature, together with those manifold *Temptations* from without, by which they are continually *provoked* and *excited:* and so to *subdue* and *conquer* these, as that they may neither take us off *from*, nor clog and indispose us *in* the Exercise of the *heavenly Virtues*, is the great Design and Business of this *warfaring* Part of the *Christian Life*.

That I may therefore handle it distinctly, I shall divide it into Three Parts, and endeavour with as much Brevity as I can; First, To *explain* the Duties of each Part, and to shew how they all conduce to our *conquering* the Difficulties of the *heavenly Virtues*; and to the *acquiring* and *perfecting* them; and, Secondly, To *press* the Duties of each Part with *proper* and *suitable* Arguments.

In this Part of our Christian Life therefore, there is,

1. Our *Beginning* or *Entrance* into it; which is in Scripture called *Repentance from dead Works*.

2. Our *Course* and *Progress* in it; and this is nothing but a *holy Life*.

3. Our *Perfecting* and *Consummation* of it; and this is *final Perseverance* in well-doing; each of which have their proper and peculiar Duties, which I shall endeavour in this Chapter to *explain* and *inforce*.

SECT. I.

Concerning those Duties that are proper to our Beginning *and* Entrance *into this* Warfaring *Part of our Christian Life, shewing how they all conduce to the* subduing *of Sin, and* acquiring *the heavenly* Virtues.

THIS first Part of our *Militant* Life being nothing but our *Initial* Repentance, or the first *turning* of our Souls to God from a State of wilful Sin and Rebellion, the Duties that are proper to it, and by which this *Turn* of our Souls is to be introduced and performed, may be reduced to these six Heads;

1. A hearty and firm *Belief* of the Truth of our *Religion*.

2. A due *Consideration* of its *Motives*, and a balancing of them with the *Hardships* and *Difficulties* we are to undergo.

3. A deep and thorow *Conviction* of our great need of a *Mediator*, to render us acceptable to God.

4. A hearty *Sorrow*, *Shame*, and *Remorse* for our Sins past.

5. Earnest *Prayer* to God for *Aid* and *Assistance* to enable us effectually to renounce them.

6. A serious and well-weighed *Resolution* to forsake and abandon them for ever.

I. It is necessary to our good *Beginning* of this our *Christian Warfare*, that we should heartily *believe* the *Truth* and *Reality* of our *Religion:* For our hearty *Belief* of the Gospel is in Scripture represented as the main and principal Weapon by which we are to combat against the world and our own Lusts. And hence it is called *the Shield of Faith*, and *the Breast-plate of Faith*, which are the Two principal Parts of Armour of *Defence*, denoting that an *hearty Belief* of the Gospel is the principal *Defence* of a *Christian* against all the *fiery Darts* of Temptation; the Armour of Proof that guards our Innocence, and renders us invulnerable in all our spiritul Conflicts: For, *above all Things*, saith the Apostle, *take the Shield of Faith, whereby ye shall be able to quench the fiery Darts of the wicked one*, Eph. vi. 16. And as it is the principal Part of our *defensive*, so it is also of our *offensive* Armour: For so we find all the Victories and Triumphs of those glorious Heroes, *Heb.* xi. attributed to this irresistible Weapon of their Faith: 'Twas by Faith that they despised Crowns, confronted the Anger of Kings, and triumphed over the bitterest Torments and Afflictions; *by Faith that they wrought Righteously, obtained Promises, stopped the Mouths of Lions, quenched the Violence of Fire, escaped the Edge of the Sword, and out of Weakness were made strong.* Nay, so great a Share hath *Faith* in the Successes of our *Christian Warfare*, that it is called by the Apostle, *the good Fight of Faith*, 1 Tim. vi. 12. and St. *John* assures us, that *this is the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith*, 1 John v. 4.

For if we firmly believe the Gospel, that will furnish us with undeniable Answers to return to all Temptations, and enable us infinitely to *out-bid* the World, whatsoever it should proffer us for our Innocence: For our *Belief* of the Gospel carries in the one Hand infinitely greater *Goods*, and in the other infinitely greater *Evils*, to *allure* and *bind* us fast to our Duty, than any the World can propose to *entice* or *terrify* us from it: For on the one hand it discovers to us those Immortal Regions of the Blessed, which are the proper Seat and pure Element of Happiness; where the blessed Inhabitants live in a continued Fruition of their utmost Wishes, being every Moment entertained with fresh and inravishing Scenes of *Pleasure*; where all their Happiness is *eternal*, and all their Eternity nothing else but one continued Act of *Love*, and *Praise*, and *Joy*, and *Triumph*; where there are no *Sighs* or *Tears*; no Intermixtures of *Sorrow* or *Misery*; but every Heart is full of *Joy*, and every Joy is a *Quintessence*, and every happy Moment is crowned with some fresh and new Enjoyment. On the other hand, it sets before our Eyes a most *frightful* and *amazing* Prospect of those dismal Shades of Horror, where mighty Numbers of condemned Ghosts perpetually wander to and fro, tormented with endless *Rage* and *Despair*; where they always *burn* without *consuming*, always *faint* but never *die*, being forced to languish out a long Eternity in unpitied Sighs and Groans: And after such a Prospect as this, what *poor inconsiderable* Trifles will all the Goods and Evils of this World appear to us? But yet unless we *believe* the Reality of them, how great soever they may be in *themselves*, they will signify no more to our *Hope* and *Fear* (which are the Master-springs of our Action) than if they were so many golden *Dreams*, or lifeless *Scare-crows:* For all Proposals of Good and Evil do work upon the Minds of Men proportionably as they are *believed* and *assented* to; as that which is not *true*, is not; so that which we do not *believe*, is to us as if it were *not*. How then is it possible we should be moved by that Good or Evil which we do not *believe*, and in which, by Consequence, we cannot apprehend ourselves *concerned?*

Wherefore in our *Entrance* into the *Christian Warfare*, it is highly necessary that we do not take up our Faith at a *venture*, and believe *winking*, without

knowing *why* or *wherefore*; but that we ſhould, ſo far as we are able, impartially examine the *Evidences* of our Religion, and ſearch into the *Grounds* of its *Credibility*, that ſo we may be able to give ſome Reaſon to *ourſelves* and *others*, of the *Hope* that is in us. For which End it will be needful that we ſhould read, and impartially conſider, ſome of the *Apologies* for the *Chriſtian Religion*; of which we have ſundry excellent ones in our own Language *; and if we will but take the pains to inſtruct ourſelves in the *plain* and *eaſy* Evidences of *Chriſtianity*, we ſhall quickly ſee abundant Cauſe to aſſent to it; and then our Faith being founded on a firm Baſis of Reaſon, will be able to bid Defiance to the World, and to out-ſtand the moſt furious Storms of Temptation.

* Dr. *Stillingfleet's* Origines. Dr. *Patrick's* Tranſlation of *Grotius.* Sir *Charles Wolſley.*

II. To our good *Beginning* of this our *Chriſtian Warfare*, it is alſo neceſſary that we ſhould duly *conſider* the *Motives* of our Religion, and balance them with the *Hardſhips* and *Difficulties* we are to undergo: For thus our Saviour makes *Conſideration* a neceſſary Introduction to our *Chriſtian Warfare*, Luke xiv. 28. where he compares Mens ruſhing headlong into the Difficulties of the Chriſtian Life without Conſideration, to a Man's reſolving to build a Tower without compting the Charge of it, or a King's going to War without ever conſidering before-hand, whether with his Army of Ten Thouſand he be able to encounter his Enemy with Twenty: By both which Compariſons he intimates to us the unproſperous Iſſue of Mens liſting themſelves under his Banner to combat the Devil, the World, and their own Luſts, without ever conſidering before-hand either their *own* Strength or the *Enemies*, the Arguments with which they muſt fight, or the Difficulties that will *croſs* and *oppoſe* them: So that when they come to execute their raſh Reſolutions, there ſtart up ſo many Difficulties in their way which they never *thought of*, and againſt which they took no care to *fore-arm* themſelves, that they have not the Heart and Courage to ſtand before them; but after a few faint Attempts are preſently ſounding a cowardly Retreat.

For indeed *Conſideration* is the Life and Soul of Faith, that *animates* and *actuates* its Principles, and *elicites* and *draws forth* all their natural Power and Energy. And let the Truths we believe be never ſo *weighty* and *momentous* in themſelves, never ſo apt to *ſpirit* and *invigorate* us, yet unleſs we ſeriouſly *conſider* and *apply* them to our Wills and Affections, and take the Pains to extract out of them their native Vigour and Efficacy, and to infuſe it into our Faculties and Powers, they will lie, like ſo many dead Notions in our Minds, and never impart to us the leaſt Degree of Spiritual Courage and Activity. And accordingly our Saviour attributes the ill Succeſs of God's Word in the Hearts of Men (which he compares to the *High-way*, the *ſtony* and *thorny* Ground) either to their not conſidering it *at all*, or to their not conſidering it *deeply* enough, or to their not conſidering it *long* enough: Either the Divine Truths which they heard went no farther than their Ears, and ſo lay openly expoſed, like ſo many looſe Corns upon the High-way, to be picked up by the Fowls of the Air; or if it entred into their Mind and Conſideration, it was ſo *ſlightly* and *ſuperſicially*, that, like Corn ſown in a rocky Ground, it had not Depth enough to take root, to *faſten* and *grow* into their Minds, and *digeſt* into Principles of Action; or if they, at preſent, received it into their deeper and more ſerious Conſideration, it was but for *a little while*; for by and by they permit their worldly Cares and Pleaſures, like Thorns, to ſpring up in their Thoughts and choak it, before it was arrived to any Maturity: But that which render'd it ſo *proſperous* and *fruitful* in good and honeſt Hearts, was, that having heard the Word, they *kept it*, *i. e.* retained it in their *Thoughts* and *Conſideration*, and ſo *brought forth Fruit with Patience*, Luke viii. 12, 13, 14, 15. So that to the making of a good *Beginning* in Religion, it is not only neceſſary that we ſhould *ponder* the Motives and Arguments of Religion, and balance them with the Difficulties of it, but that we ſhould

revolve

revolve and *repeat* them in our Minds, till we have represented to our selves with the utmost Life and Reality, whatsoever makes *for* and *against* our Entrance into the Christian Warfare; and upon our having weighed them over and over in the Scales of an even and impartial Judgment, we have brought the Debate to this Result and Conclusion, that there is infinitely more Weight in the *Arguments* of Religion to *persuade* us to it, than in all the *Difficulties* of it to *dishearten* us from it. For unless we enter into Religion *fore-armed* with the Motives, and *fore-warned* of the Difficulties of it, we shall never be able to stand our Ground; but finding more *Opposition* than we expected, and having not a sufficient Strength of Argument to *bear up* against it, we shall quickly *repent* of our rash Undertaking, and be forced to *retreat* from it with Shame and Dishonour. For this is usually the Issue of those *rash* and *unsettled* Purposes which Men make in the heats of their Passion; when they have been *warmed* by some pathetick Discourse, or *startled* by some great Danger, or *chafed* into a Displeasure against their Sins, by the sense of some very dolorous Accident whereinto they have been betrayed by them; in these or such like Cases, it's usual with Men to make *hasty* Resolutions of Amendment, without considering either the *Matters* which they resolve upon, or the *Motives* which should support their Resolution; and so finding when they come to Practice, more Difficulty in the Matter than they are aware of, and having not sufficient Motives to carry them thro' it, their Resolution *flags* in the Execution, and very often *yields* to the next Temptation which encounters them.

Now tho I do not deny but that those heats of Passion are good Opportunities to *begin* our Religion in, and if *wisely* improved, will very much contribute to our Voyage Heaven-wards, and like a brisk Gale of Wind, render it much more *expedite* and *easy*; yet if in these Heats we resolve too soon, without a due Consideration of all Particulars, and of the Difficulties on the one side, and the Arguments on the other, it is hardly possible that our Resolution should ever prove a lasting Principle of Goodness. For when we resolve *inconsiderately*, we resolve to do we know not *what*, and our Resolution includes a Thousand Particulars that we are not aware of; most of which being repugnant to our vicious Inclinations, will, when we come to practise them, be attended with such Difficulties as will easily startle our weak Resolution, which having not a sufficient Foundation of Reason to support it, will never be able to out-stand those boisterous Storms of Temptation whereunto it will be continually exposed. If therefore we mean our Resolution should *hold out*, and commence a living Principle of Goodness, we must found it in a thorow *Consideration* both of the *Duties* and *Difficulties* of Religion, and of the *Motives* which should engage us to embrace it; we must set before our Minds all the Sins we must *part with*, and all the Duties we must *submit to*, and fairly represent to ourselves all the Difficulties and Temptations wherewith we must *engage*; and as much as in us lies, render them *actual* and *present* to us, by supposing ourselves *already* engaged in our Spiritual Warfare, and surrounded with all the Temptations both from within and without, that we can reasonably expect will oppose themselves against us; and having thus placed ourselves in the midst of the Difficulties of Religion, we must never cease urging ourselves with the great Arguments and Motives of it, till we have thorowly persuaded our stubborn Wills, and obtained of them an explicite Consent to every Duty that calls for our Consent and Resolution.

III. To our good *Beginning* of the *Christian Warfare* it is also necessary that we be *deeply* and *thorowly* convinced of our great need of a *Mediator* to make a Propitiation for our Sins, and render us acceptable to God. 'For 'tis to convince us of this necessary Truth that the Scripture doth so expresly declare, That as *there is one God*, so *there is one Mediator between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus*, 1 Tim. ii. 5. that *if any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous*, and that *he is the Propitiation for our Sins, and not for ours only, but for the Sins of the whole World*; and that *'tis for his*

Name

Name sake that our Sins are forgiven, 1 John ii. 1, 2, 12. that *we have Redemption thro' his Blood*, Ephes. i. 7. and that *without the shedding his Blood there is no Remission*, and that *'twas by the Sacrifice of himself that Christ put away Sin*, Heb. ix. 22, 26. that *we are accepted of God thro' his beloved Son*, Ephes. i. 6. that *Christ is entred into Heaven now to appear in the presence of God for us*, Heb. ix. 24. and that *there He ever lives to make intercession for us*, Heb. vii. 25. that *'tis thro' Him that we have access unto the Father*, Ephes. ii. 18. and *by Him that we have admittance to his Grace and Favour*, Rom. v. 2. The design of all which is thorowly to convince us of this great Truth, that by our Apostasy from God and Rebellion against Him we have all render'd ourselves so very obnoxious to his Vengeance, that he would not pardon us upon any less *Atonement* than the precious Blood, nor admit us into favour upon any less *Motive* than the powerful Intercession of His own Son; that by the heinousness of our Guilt we have so highly incensed the Father of Mercies against us, that no less Consideration than the *Death* and *Advocation* of the greatest and dearest Person in the whole World, will move Him to admit of our Repentance, and listen to our Supplications. And certainly next to exacting the Punishment due to our Sins at our own *hands*, the most dreadful Severity he could have expressed, was to resolve not to remit it upon any other Consideration than that of his own Son's undergoing it in *our stead*; by which he hath given us the greatest reason that Heaven and Earth could afford, to tremble at his Justice, even whilst we are inclosed in the Arms of his Mercy.

This therefore we ought to be deeply and thorowly convinced of, that our Sins have set us at such a *distance* from God, that 'tis nothing but the Blood of Christ will *reconcile* Him to us; and that tho *without* our Repentance He will never be reconciled to us, yet 'tis not for the sake of that or any thing else *we* can do, that He will be induced to receive us into his favour, but only for the sake of that precious Sacrifice which His Eternal Son hath offered up for us. The firm *Persuasion* and *Consideration* of which will mightily *over-awe* our Minds, and imprint upon them such *ghastly* and *horrible* Apprehensions of Sin, as will *scare* us from all Thoughts of Compliance with it; the dreadful Demonstration which God hath given us of his Righteous Severity against it in the very Reason of His pardoning it, will effectually *antidote* us against all our sinful Securities and Confidences: For this way of God's pardoning us upon the Sacrifice of His Son, guards his Mercy with such an awful Terror, as is sufficient to dishearten the most desperate Sinner from presuming upon it. For he that dares presume to sin on upon a Mercy that cost the Blood of the Son of God, hath courage enough to *outface* the Flames of Hell, and is not capable of any Mercy that the great God can indulge with safety to his own Authority. For what Mercy can be safe from that Man's *Abuse* and *Presumption*, that dares abuse a Mercy so *guarded* and *secured* as this is, by being founded upon such a dreadful Consideration.

And as a thorow Persuasion of the Necessity of *Christ's Sacrifice* to the Forgiveness of our Sins, will fill us with awful Apprehensions of the Divine Severity, and set before us a most dismal Prospect of the vast demerit of our Sins, both which are necessary to engage us to a thorow Reformation; so a thorow Conviction of the Necessity of his *Intercession* to render our *Duties*, our *Prayers*, and Persons acceptable to God, will effectually *humble* and *abase* us in our own Eyes, which, as I shall shew you by and by, is highly conducive to a good *Beginning* of this our *Christian Warfare*. For next to *banishing* us from his Presence *for ever*, the most effectual Course God could take to *abase* us, was to exclude us from all *immediate* Intercourse with him, and not to admit of any more Addresses or Supplications from us, but only thro' the Hands of a *Mediator*; which is a plain Demonstration how infinitely *pure* he is, and how *base* and *vile* our Sins have render'd us; insomuch that he will not suffer a sinful Creature to come near him, otherwise than by a *Proxy*; that he will not accept of a *Service* from a guilty Hand, nor listen to a *Prayer* from a sinful

a sinful Mouth, till 'tis first *hallowed* and *presented* to him by a *pure* and *holy* Mediator. So that unless we are strangely *inconsiderate*, we cannot but be touched with a deep Sense of our own *Vileness*, when we think at what a *distance* the Pure and Holy God keeps us; how he *stands off* at the Stench of our Abominations; and notwithstanding all his Benignity towards us, will neither *hear us*, nor have any thing to *do with* us, without the powerful *Intercession* of his own Son.

And as our Conviction of the Necessity we have of Christ's *Sacrifice* and *Intercession* is very apt to affect us with holy *Sorrow* and *Fear*, both which are very powerful Instruments of our Reformation; so our Persuasion of the Reality and Excellency of his *Mediation* is no less apt to inspire us with a mighty *Hope* and *Assurance* of Acceptance with God, if we reform and amend: For it seems that upon *propitiatory* Sacrifices and *interceeding* Spirits, guilty Minds have been always inclined to place their confidence of Acceptance with God. Hence it was a Principle generally received by Men of all Nations and Religions, (however it came to pass I know not) that for sinful Men to appease the incensed Divinity, it was necessary, first, that some *Life* should be *sacrificed* to him by way of *Satisfaction* for there Sins; and that the *nobler* it was, the more *propitious* it render'd him. 2. That some high Favourite of his should be prevail'd with to *interceed* with him in their behalf. Whereupon, understanding by universal Tradition, that there were a sort of *middle Beings* (whom they call *Dæmons*, and we *Angels*) between the Sovereign God and Men, they began to address to *These*, and to bribe them with sacred Honours to *interpose* with God in their behalf. And if they could make a shift to rely upon *Sacrifices*, the most precious of which were the Lives of sinful Men; and to depend upon *Intercessors*, of whose Interest with God they had little or no Security; what a mighty ground of Confidence and assurance have *we*, for whom the Son of God once offered such a *meritorious* Sacrifice upon Earth, and continues to make such a powerful Intercession in Heaven? For besides that, as he was a *spotless* and *innocent* Person, His Sacrifice was *wholly* meritorious for guilty Offenders; and besides that, as he was a Person of infinite *Value* and *Dignity*, his Sacrifice was meritorious for *a World* of guilty Offenders. God, upon whose good Pleasure the *Admission* or *Refusal* of it intirely depended, has openly declared His Acceptation thereof as a Propitiation for the Sins of the World, and engaged Himself by a publick *Grant* and *Charter* of Mercy, to indemnify, for the sake of it, every Sinner in the World that will but return to Him by a serious and hearty Repentance; neither of which great Things could ever be said of any other Sacrifice. And in the Virtue of this *Sacrifice*, as well as his own Personal *Interest* with His Father, He now interceeds in our behalf; and pleading our Cause, as He doth, with the price of our Souls in his Hand, even in his precious Blood by which He redeemed them, we may be sure that with that powerful *Oratory* He cannot fail of succeeding in our behalf. For having *purchased* for us, by his Blood, all those Favours which He *interceeds* for, He is invested with the Right and Power of bestowing them upon us. So that now, for our greater Security, all those Favours, which God hath *promised* us, are actually *deposited* in the Hands of our *Mediator:* And though His bare Promise is in itself as great an Assurance as can be given us: yet it is to be considered that guilty Minds are naturally *anxious* and full of unreasonable *Jealousies*, and consequently whilst they looked upon God as their *adverse* Party, and a Party infinitely *offended* by them, would have been very prone to *suspect* the worst, had they had nothing but his bare Word to depend on. And therefore in Condescension to this pitiable Infirmity of his sinful Creatures, he hath not only *promised* them his Acceptance and Favour upon Condition of their Return to him, but hath also put the *Performance* of his Promise into a *third Hand*, even into the Hand of a *Mediator*, who by the nature of his Office is *equally* concerned for both Parties; as well that God should perform

his *Promiſe*, if we performed our *Duty*; as that we ſhould perform our *Duty*, if we received the Benefit of his *Promiſe*. And hence, *Heb.* vii. 22. our Mediator is called the *Sponſor*, or *Surety of a better Covenant.* So that now we have no longer to do with God *immediately* as our adverſe Party, but by a *Mediator*, who by his Office is obliged to be on *our* ſide as well as *God*'s, and to take care that neither receive the *others* Part of the Covenant, without performing his *own*. Thus as he hath been ſometimes pleaſed in Compliance with human Weakneſs to enforce his *Promiſe* with his *Oath*; not that the *one* is in its own Nature a greater Security from God than the *other*, but becauſe with *Men* an *Oath* is more obliging than a *Promiſe*; ſo in great Condeſcenſion to the unreaſonable *Diffidence* of our guilty Minds, he hath not only *promiſed* us Pardon and Acceptance upon our Repentance, but he hath alſo given us a *collateral Security* for the performance of it, even the Security of a *Mediator*, in whoſe Hands he hath *depoſited* whatſoever he hath promiſed us. Not that *in itſelf* this is a greater Security than his own bare Word and Promiſe, which he cannot *falſify* without renouncing his Being; but becauſe this way of giving Security by a *third Perſon* is more *accommodate* to the Method of our Covenants and Agreements with one another, and conſequently more apt to ſatisfy our *anxious* and *diffident* Minds.

And thus the Conviction of our need of a *Mediator*, and the Perſuaſion of the *Reality* and *Excellency* of his Mediation, will powerfully work both on our *Hope* and *Fear*, which are the main Springs of all our Religious Endeavours; and give us at once the moſt *horrible* Proſpect of the Evil of Sin, and the moſt *comfortable* Aſſurance of Pardon and Acceptance with God upon our Repentance and Amendment; both which are abſolutely neceſſary to our ſucceſsful *Entrance* into the *Chriſtian Warfare.*

IV. To our *Beginning* of this *Holy Warfare*, it is alſo neceſſary that we ſhould be affected with a deep *Sorrow* and *Shame* and *Remorſe* for our paſt Iniquities: For this the Apoſtle calls, *ſorrowing to Repentance*; and tells us that *godly Sorrow worketh Repentance to Salvation not to be repented of*, 2 Cor. vii, 9, 10. and accordingly it is recorded of St. *Peter*'s Converts, that the beginning of their Repentance was their being *pricked at the heart*, Acts ii. 37. and even Repentance itſelf is in Scripture called *a broken and contrite Heart*; this being the moſt immediate Preparation to a true Repentance or Change of Mind, *Pſal.* li. 17. And hence the antient Penitents are deſcribed in Scripture as *girding themſelves with Sackcloth, and Repenting in Duſt and Aſhes*; in Alluſion to the antient manner of *great* and *ſolemn* Mournings, which was to put on *Sackcloth*, cover the Head with *Aſhes*, and ſit in the *Duſt*. And in the Primitive and Pureſt Ages of Chriſtianity, it is evident, that the *bittereſt* Sorrows and Remorſes were looked upon as neceſſary Preparations to Repentance; for the Penitents, in thoſe Days as *Tertullian* and *Nazienzen* deſcribe them, "Lay proſtrate at "the Church Doors in Sackcloth and Aſhes, ſupplicating the Prayers of the "Presbyters and Widows, hanging on the Garments and Knees of thoſe that "entred into the Church, kiſſing their Foot-ſteps, and with Rivers of Tears "in their Eyes, beſeeching their Prayers to God for their Pardon." Now tho we are not under the Severities of ſuch an *Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline*, yet we are equally obliged with thoſe antient Penitents to exerciſe it *internally* in our Hearts. For Sin is as bad *now* as it was *then*, and as great an evil in *us*, as it was in *them*; and therefore ought to be lamented by us with an *equal* Sorrow and Remorſe. And, indeed, if we ever mean to wage War with it with Succeſs, it is neceſſary we ſhould acquire before-hand a thorow *Senſe* and *Feeling* of the Evil of it; that we ſhould chaſtiſe our Souls with ſome degree of that *bitter* Sorrow and Regret it deſerves, and inflict upon ourſelves ſome part of that Hell of infinite *Horror* and *Anguiſh* that is ingendring in its Womb; that ſo being the more *ſenſible* of its Malignity, we may be the more *enraged* againſt it, and enter the Liſts with it with the greater *Reſolution* and *Animoſity*. For our Sorrow and Remorſe for our Sins,

if it be *serious* and *hearty*, will convert into *Hatred* and *Indignation* against them, and that *Hatred* will *animate* us in all our Conflicts with them, and render us more *obstinate* against their Terrors and Allurements. So that when in the After-course of our Warfare against them, we are tempted afresh to *yield* and *comply* with them, the Remembrance of the past *Shame* and *Sorrow*, *Remorse* and *Confusion* we have undergone for their sakes, will render us far more *deaf* and *inexorable*, than otherwise we should be to their Solicitations.

If therefore we would engage in this Spiritual Warfare with Success, we must be often *reflecting* upon our past Sins, and representing them to ourselves in all their *aggravating* Circumstances. And when we have surveyed them *round about*, and considered them in all their natural *Turpitude*, *Disingenuity*, and *Indecency*, and applied them to ourselves in all their *appendent* Stings, *shameful* Effects, and *dismal* Circumstances, so that our Hearts begin to *feel* them, and to *smart* and *bleed* under the dolorous Sense of them; then must we pour them out before God, in *sad* and *mournful* Confessions. For the very *Confession* of our Sins before so pure and great a Being, is in itself an effectual Means to increase our Shame and Sorrow for them; and he must have a very hard Heart that can *ingenuously*, and without any *Reserve*, lay open his Crimes before the God of Heaven and Earth, in all their *black* Aggravations, without being *stung* with a sensible Regret and Confusion; especially if he frequently repeat his Confessions as he ought to do.

V. To our successful *Beginning* of this our *Christian Warfare*, it is also necessary that we earnestly *implore* the divine *Aid* and *Assistance*, to enable us to go thro' with it. For God knowing how unable we are *of ourselves* to engage in this great Enterprize, with that good Conduct that is necessary to give us any probability of Success, hath promised us his own *Presence* and *Assistance* even from the *Beginning* to the *End* of it; and if in any Part of it his Assistance be necessary, 'tis doubtless in the *Entrance*, which, as I shall shew you by and by, is by far the most *difficult* and *hazardous*. If therefore we presume to *enter* upon it without *supplicating* God to *second* us with his Grace and Assistance, we shall quickly find ourselves shamefully *foiled* and *defeated*. For tho he hath promised to assist us, yet 'tis upon Condition that we earnestly *beg* and *seek* him; he will *give his Spirit*, but it is *to those that ask it*, Luke xi. 13. he will *draw near unto us*, but first, *we must draw near unto him*, James iv. 8. and we are assured *that we shall have if we ask, that we shall find if we seek, and that it shall be opened to us if we knock*, Mat. vii. 7. And therefore we are bid to *go boldly to the Throne of Grace that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help us in the Time of Need*, Heb. iv. 16. and not only to *pray without ceasing*, 1 Thes. v. 17. but *in every thing by Prayer and Supplication to let our Requests be made known unto God*, Phil. iv. 6. and if in *every thing* we ought to make known our Wants to him, then much more in this *great* and *difficult* Undertaking, in which it will be impossible for us to succeed without his heavenly Aid and Assistance.

Wherefore, as we hope for Victory in this our *Spiritual Warfare*, we must earnestly implore his *Concurrence* with us, and beseech him to *second* us in all our weak Efforts and Endeavours: We must lay open our woful Case before him, and remonstrate to him, that we are heartily *willing* to do what we *are able*, but that without him we are abundantly sensible all will be *in vain*. We must tell him that our Dependence is *upon* him; and that all our Hope of *Success* is *in* him, and that we dare not stir one step *without* him; and beseech him, that he will not *stand by*, and see us spend ourselves in *ineffectual* Strugglings; but that he will graciously stretch forth his *helping* Hand to us, and not suffer us to miscarry for want of his necessary *Assistance*. Which, if we do, we may assure ourselves that the merciful God, who is the Father of our Spirits, will never *abandon* his own Offspring, whilst it cries out to him, and with pitiful and bemoaning Looks implores his *Aid* and gracious *Cooperation*.

Whilst,

Whilſt, therefore, we are thus endeavouring to prepare ourſelves for our *Spiritual Warfare*, we ought in every Act of Preparation to *look up* to God, and earneſtly *ſupplicate* the Concurrence of his Grace and Spirit. While we are endeavouring to *believe*, we muſt beg him to help our *unbelief*, to remove all *Prejudices* from our Minds, and preſent the Evidences of our Religion to our Underſtandings, in a *clear* and *convincing* Light. When we are ſetting ourſelves to a ſerious *Conſideration*, we muſt beſeech him to fix our Thoughts, to *ſuggeſt* to, and *repeat* his Heavenly Motives and Arguments ſo faſt and thick upon, our Minds, that no ſinful or worldly Thought may be able to croud in to *diſturb* or *divert* our Meditations. When we are labouring to perſuade ourſelves of our Need, and the Reality of our Saviour's *Mediation*, we muſt earneſtly intreat him to open our Eyes and convince us effectually of the horrible *Danger* of our Sin, and of the infallible *Efficacy* of that Bleſſed Remedy. When we are attempting to *affect* ourſelves with the bitter Senſe of our paſt Tranſgreſſions, we muſt implore him to ſtrike in with us, and to inſpire our Minds with ſuch *piercing* and *powerful* Convictions of the infinite *Shame*, *Baſeneſs*, and *Danger* of them, as may ſting our *brawny* Conſciences to the quick, and diſſolve our *frozen* Souls into a ſorrowful Repentance; that ſo when we enter the Liſts and proceed to *Reſolution*, which is the *Beginning* of our Spiritual Warfare, we may be armed againſt our Sins, with ſuch a lively *Faith*, ſuch puiſſant *Conſiderations*, ſuch *Horror* and *Animoſity* againſt them, and ſuch an aſſured *Hope* of being reſcued from the fatal Iſſues and Effects of them, as that we may be able to promiſe ourſelves a happy Succeſs in the enſuing *Courſe* of our Warfare againſt them. And having thus fitted and accoutred ourſelves for this great and momentous Enterprize,

VI. We are to enter into a ſerious and ſolemn *Reſolution* of Amendment, of forſaking and renouncing all our Sins, and never returning to them more whatſoever Temptations may *invite*, or Difficulties *encounter* and *oppoſe* us. Which *Reſolution* is in Scripture called μετάνοια, which we tranſlate *Repentance*, but in ſtrictneſs ſignifies a *Change of Mind* or of Purpoſe and Reſolution; a renouncing our *ſinful* Purpoſes, and ſolemnly engaging ourſelves in a contrary Reſolution of *living ſoberly and righteouſly and godly in this preſent World*. So that whereſoever the Precept of Repentance is expreſſed by this Word, the meaning of it is, to oblige us to *change* the Wicked *Purpoſes* of our Hearts into a firm and ſerious *Reſolution* of forſaking all Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, and intirely reſigning up ourſelves to the Will and Diſpoſal of God. And hence it is that μετανοεῖν and ἐπιστρέφειν, *i. e.* to *change our Minds*, and *convert* or *turn*, are in Scripture ſo often put together; the one denoting the *inward* Change of our Reſolution, the other the *outward* Change of our Practice purſuant to it. So *Acts* iii. 19. *Repent and be Converted*, and *Acts* xxvi. 20. *that they ſhould repent and turn to God, and do works meet for Repentance*; that is, That they ſhould reſolve to forſake their Sins, and ſubmit to their Duty, and put their Reſolution into Practice. And ſo that other Word μεταμέλεια, which we alſo render *Repentance*, ſtrictly ſignifies *an after-care*, that is purſuant unto this μετάνοια, or *Change of Reſolution*.

Now this Repentance or Change of Reſolution is the *Initial* Act of the Religion of Sinners, whereby they *reſume* their inward Man from the Service of Sin, and *ſubmit* and *reſign* their Wills to God; whereby in Heart and Will they *forſake* the Devil's Colours, and liſt themſelves *Volunteers* under the Banner of Chriſt. And being ſo, it ought to be performed with ſo much the more *Care* and *Preparation*. For the *Beginning* of all great Enterprizes is the *Ground* and *Foundation* of them; which if it be not firmly laid, will be apt to ſink under the *Superſtructures*, and to endanger their Ruin and Downfall. Now all the *foregoing* Duties being neceſſary Preparations to a good *Reſolution*, we ought, before we *reſolve*, to ſpend a conſiderable portion of Time in the diligent Practice of *them*, and not to reſolve hand over head, till we are duly and truly prepared for it; till by exerciſing our *Faith* and *Conſideration*, &c.

we have *broken* and *tamed* our perverse and obstinate Wills, and thorowly persuaded them to *part with* every Sin, and to *approve of*, and *consent to*, every Duty that is comprehended in a thorow Resolution of Amendment. And if when we are about to *resolve*, we find, upon a strict Examination, any secret *Reserve* or *Exception* in our Wills, if there be any Lust which they are not thorowly *persuaded* to part with, or any Duty to which they are not fully *reconciled*, we ought for that Time to forbear *resolving*, and to go on in the Exercise of the *preparatory* Duties, till we find our reluctant Wills thorowly *conquered* and *persuaded* by them. For if there be any *Leak* left open in our Resolution for any Sin to creep in at, *that* will be sure to insinuate in the next *Storm* of Temptation; and if it should not let in *other* Sins after it, as 'tis a thousand to one but it will, 'twill by its own *single* Weight sink us into eternal Perdition. Wherefore before ever we enter into the *Resolution* of Amendments, we ought to be very careful that our Wills be thorowly *prepared* for it; that they be reduced to a fair *Compliance* with the matter we are resolving upon, and effectually *dissuaded* out of all Resolution to the contrary; and when this is done, we may chearfully proceed to the forming of our good *Resolution*.

Which ought to be performed by us, between God and ourselves, with the greatest *Seriousness* and *Solemnity*. For now our *Hearts* being ready, we are to betake ourselves to our *Knees*, and in these, or such like Words, to devote ourselves to God; *O thou blessed Author of my Being, I am now fully convinced that I owe myself to thee by a thousand Ties and Obligations, and am infinitely sorry and ashamed, that I have so long sequestred and withdrawn myself from thee to serve my own base Lusts and Affections. Wherefore now in thy dread Presence, and in that of thy Holy Angels, I here entirely resign up myself unto thee, and do resolve, without any Reserve or Exception, that whatsoever Temptations I may meet with for the future, I will never wilfully withdraw or alienate myself from thee more. From henceforth I heartily renounce all my Sins, and particularly those that have been most dear and pleasant to me, and do faithfully promise to continue thy true and loyal Subject as long as I breathe, and that whatsoever Invitations I may have to the contrary, I will never revoke the Resolution I now make, or any part of it. So help me, O my God.*

And having thus solemnly *resolved*, it will be highly necessary that for the farther *Ratification* of it, we should yet more solemnly repeat it in the *Holy Sacrament*; wherein, according to the Custom of *Feasts* upon *Sacrifices*, God and every faithful Communicant do *mutually* re-oblige themselves to one another, and upon the Sacred Symbols of the Body and Blood of Jesus, do *ratify* to each other each other's Part of that everlasting Covenant which by the Federal Rite of his meritorious Death and Sacrifice was inviolably *sealed* and *confirmed*. So that when we take those Holy Elements into our Hands, which the Priest in God's stead presents and offers to us, we do in effect make this Solemn Dedication of ourselves to God; *Here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, Ourselves, our Souls and Bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and lively Sacrifice unto thee, and here we call to witness his sacred Blood that redeemed us, and those vocal Wounds which do now interceed for us, that from henceforth we oblige our selves never to start from thy Service, what Difficulties soever we may encounter in it, or what Temptations soever we may have to forsake it.* And having thus resolved and confirmed our Resolution by the Body and Blood of our Saviour, and taken the Sacrament upon it not to depart from what we have resolved, we have actually *listed* and *engaged* ourselves in a Warfare against Sin, the World, and the Devil, upon the final *Success* whereof our everlasting Fate depends. And thus you see what Duty is implied in the *Beginning* or *Entrance* of this *Warfaring* Part of the Life of a Christian.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Wherein some Motives *are urged to persuade Men to the Practice of those Duties that are proper to the* Beginning *of the* Christian Warfare.

HAving, in the former Section, given a brief Account of those Duties which are necessary to the well *Beginning* of our *Christian Warfare*, I shall now, for a close of that Argument, endeavour to *press* and *persuade* those who have not as yet *begun* to enter immediately upon it, by putting in Practice these *Initial* Duties of it: You who have been hitherto *warring* against God, and *striving* against your Duty and your Happiness, be at last persuaded to *make a Stand* for a while, and to *listen* to the voice of Reason and Religion, which do both call aloud to you to *face about*, to *desert* the Party wherein you are engaged, and *come* over to the side of Virtue. And that I may, if possible, prevail, I do here earnestly beseech you, even by all that is *dear* and *precious* to you, by the Love of God, and by the Lives of your Souls, and by all your Hopes of Happiness in the World to come, seriously to consider with me these following *Motives*.

1. That there is a vast *Necessity* of beginning this our Spiritual Warfare *one time or other*.

2. That 'tis unspeakably most *secure* and *advantageous* for us to begin it *now*.

3. That the *final Success* of it doth very much depend upon the well *Beginning* of it.

4. That when once we have well *begun* it, the main *Difficulty* of it is conquered.

I. Consider the vast *Necessity* there is of beginning this Spiritual Warfare *one time or other*: For that which is necessary for us to accomplish *at last*, is necessary to be undertaken by us *one time or other*. Now it is as necessary for us to *oppose* and *vanquish* the Temptations of the World, and the Corruptions of our own Nature, as it is *not to go* to Hell, or *not to miss* of Heaven: For in this great Battle the everlasting Fate of our Souls is to be decided; and if we come off *Victors*, we are *made*; if *vanquished*, we are *undone* to Eternity. So that in this Spiritual Warfare we do not contend, like the Warriors of this World, for a Triumphal Wreath that will *wither* upon our Brows, or for Fame and Renown, which is nothing but the *Breath* of a Company of talking *People*, or for the enlarging of our Empire over the next *handful* of a *Turf*; but we are contending with Enemies that are pursuing us to *Hell*, and binding us in Chains of *everlasting Darkness*. We are to fight for our *Immortality*, for all our Hopes of Happiness and Well-being in a *never-ending Life*; and when so much depends upon the Success of our Conflict, and we must *conquer* and be *crowned*, or *die*; *win* the Field, and Heaven, or yield ourselves *Captives* to Eternal Misery, I leave you to judge, whether we are not obliged, under the vastest *Necessity*, one time or other, to *begin*. And if we must begin *one time or other*, why not *now* as well as *hereafter*? And to what purpose should we *defer* entring upon that Work, which we all confess we must, *at last*, not only *begin*, but *accomplish*? For to have *accomplished* a necessary Work, especially when it is *difficult* and *important*, is a great *Satisfaction* to the Mind; and whereas while it is yet to *do*, the Prospect of the *Pain* and *Labour* of it creates in us a great deal of *Trouble* and *Anxiety*; when once it is *done*, or the main Difficulty of it is *over*, every Reflection on our past Pains, *sweetens* our present Repose, and *crowns* it with Joy and Triumph. And thus it is in our *Entrance* into the *Christian Life*, which we all confess to be both *necessary* and *difficult*; and it being so, what do we

else by our *delaying* it, but only *prolong* the Pain and Trouble of it? And whereas by one *brave* Attempt we might *ease* ourselves, and set our Souls at *Rest* for ever; we *languish* away our Life in Misery, and are *sick* with the Fear of our *Remedy*; just like poor Men that are under the Torment of the *Stone*, they know they must be *cut* or *die*; but out of a frightful Apprehension of their Remedy, they put it off *from time to time*; they promise they will endure it, rather than lose their Lives; but when they come to the Trial, their Hearts fail, and they must needs have a little longer Respite; but *all the while*, they endure not only the *Pain* of their *Disease*, but also the *Apprehensions* of their *Cure*, which, *at last*, they must also actually *endure*, or *Death*, which is much more terrible to them: Whereas, had they been cut *at first*, they might have saved themselves all that Torment, and Fear of *farther* Torment, which they endured in the Time of their *Delay*. And just thus it is with those who *defer* their *Repentance*, which had they begun *at first*, when they fell into their sinful Courses, their Hearts might have been at Ease a *great while* ago, and they might have saved themselves all those *Gripes* and *Twinges* of Conscience, and all those *painful* Apprehensions of the Smart and Difficulty of repenting *at last*, which they had been forced to endure in the several Periods of their Delay. But, alas! Repentance is a *sad* Remedy! Well, be it never so *sad*, you know you must endure it, or that which is a thousand times *worse*. Why then, you will endure it, that you are resolved upon, but fain you would have a little *longer* Respite: Ah, Foolish Souls! why will you *prolong* your Misery, and *linger* out your Lives in Torment, when, as by enduring *now*, what you must endure *at last*, you might be presently at Ease, not only from the *Pain* of your *past* Guilt, but from the *Fear* of your *future* Repentance.

II. Consider that 'tis unspeakably more *secure* and *advantageous* for us to begin our Christian Warfare *now*: For *this* Life is the only Time of our Trial and Probation, the Field in which our Spiritual Warfare is to be fought, and from which we must all go off triumphing *Conquerors*, or eternal *Slaves*. And, alas! such a *slippery* and *uncertain* Thing is this our present Existence, that there is no one Part of it we can call *our own*, but what is present: For all our *Futurity* is in God's Hand and Dispose, and how he will *shorten* or *prolong* it, we are not able to prognosticate: So that, for ought we know, the next Moment may finally determine our everlasting Fate; and the Hopes of Eternity, which are now in our Hands, may slip thro' our Fingers before to morrow Morning, and leave us desperate for ever. What a dreadful Venture therefore do those Men run, that *delay*, from time to time, the *securing* their Salvation by a timely Repentance? When 'tis *now* in their own Power, would they but lay hold on the *present* Opportunity, to secure their Victory and Crown, they rather choose to go to *cross or pile* for them, and to stake them upon a Contingency that is not in their Power to dispose of.

But suppose they could secure that *hereafter* to themselves, to which they do so venturously defer their Repentance, yet still there is another Venture, of which they can *never* be secure; and that is, whether when that *hereafter* comes, God will not out of a just Resentment of their present Despite to, and Contempt of, his Grace, *withdraw* it from them; which if he should, they would be left in as great an Incapacity of Repenting, as if he had withdrawn their *Lives* from them; it being as possible for us to repent without *Life* when we are *dead*, as without God's *Grace* whilst we are *living*: So that promising that we will repent hereafter, we promise not only for *ourselves*, but for *God* too; we promise that *He* shall wait *our* leisure, and dance Attendance after us thro' all the tedious Stages of our Delays and Procrastinations; that he shall tamely put up all the Affronts and Provocations, which between *this* and our *hereafter*, we are resolved to offer him, and in the End be as much at our beck, and as ready to come into our Assistance, when

when we ſhall think fit to call for him, as if we had never given him the leaſt Offence or Provocation to the contrary: For unleſs we can ſecure ourſelves of this, it will be every whit as uncertain, whether we *repent* hereafter if we *live*, as whether we *live* to hereafter to *repent*. And what a Madneſs is it for Men, that have now their Lives and Souls in their own Hands, to ſtake and venture them upon Two ſuch contingent Iſſues, that are both of them ſo far out of their Power and Diſpoſal?

But ſuppoſe there were no Hazard in either of theſe, that we were as ſecure both of our own *Lives* and God's *Grace*, as we are of the Preſent Moment, yet we can never hope to begin our Chriſtian Warfare ſo *advantageouſly* as now: For all the Time we are deferring it, our Enemies are gathering Strength, and muſtering up their Forces againſt us; our bad Inclinations are *ripening* and *improving*, and our evil Habits are growing more *inveterate*; and ſo many Degrees of Strength as *theſe* get, *we* loſe; and ſo proportionably as their Power to *offend* us increaſes, ours to *defend* ourſelves againſt them decreaſes. What a Madneſs therefore is it for Men, who pretend to be reſolved to engage in the Chriſtian Warſare to *defer* it, as they do, from time to time, when they cannot but be ſenſible, if they take any notice of themſelves, how much every farther Delay *improves* their *Luſts*, and *impairs* their *Reaſon*; how it *fortifies* their Enemy, and *weakens* themſelves. You ſay you are convinced of the *Neceſſity* of this Warfare, and *reſolved* to undertake it *one time or other*, tho *as yet* you cannot prevail with yourſelves to enter upon it: And why not yet; why, for ſome Reaſon or other, forſooth, you find yourſelves averſe to it; and do you imagine, that if you are averſe to it *to Day*, you will be leſs averſe to it *to Morrow* or *next* Day? No, fond Men, do not abuſe yourſelves, for if you will not enter upon it *now*, be aſſured of this, you will never find yourſelves either ſo *willing* to it, or ſo *fit* and *able* for it again as long as you live: For your Luſts will grow every Day dearer and dearer to you, and ſo *twine* and *wrap themſelves*, by degrees, about your Hearts and Affections, that you will every Day find yourſelves more and more unwilling to part with them; and at laſt they will *cling* ſo faſt that there will be no pulling them from ye, without pulling away your Souls with them. Wherefore talk no more, I beſeech you, of repenting *hereafter*, but reſolve once for all, that you will repent *now or never*.

III. Conſider the *final Succeſs* of this your Spiritual Warfare, doth very much depend upon your *well-beginning* of it. By what hath been ſaid, you plainly ſee, there is an abſolute Neceſſity of beginning it *one time or other*, and that you can never begin it ſo *ſecurely* and *advantageouſly* as *now*; but unleſs you begin it *well* now, that is, with a thorow Preparation of Heart, you were e'en as good ſit ſtill and not begin *at all*: For when once you come to the Trial, to encounter the Oppoſitions of a corrupt Nature, and contend with the Difficulties of a holy Life, you will then quickly find your ſappy Reſolutions ſink, and, like ſo many rotten Banks, yield and give way at every Spring-tide of Temptation. But as the well-laying the *Foundations* of a Houſe ſecures the *Superſtructures* againſt the Violences of all future Storms and foul Weather, ſo the firſt ſettling of your Reſolution upon a *firm* and *ſtedfaſt* Baſis, will be a mighty Safeguard to it againſt all enſuing Storms of Temptation. That well-grounded *Faith* and thorow *Conſideration*, which induced us to it, will go along with it, and guard it thro' the Enemy's Quarters with ſuch invincible Reaſons, as no ſinful Motive will be able to diſprove or cope with. That hearty *Shame* and bitter *Sorrow* and *Regret*, which we felt in the forming our Reſolution, will animate and render it more firm and inexorable againſt all the Solicitations of Sin for the future. Thoſe fervent and earneſt *Prayers* which preceded and accompanied it, will not only engage *us* to take the more *Care* and *Regard* of it but engage God alſo to contribute more *Aid* and *Aſſiſtance* to it in all its enſuing Conflicts and Encounters. And when in the framing of our Reſolution we have taken effectual Care before-hand not

to

to resolve *upon* any Thing, but what we have considered the *Difficulty* of; or *against* any Thing, but what we have felt the *Shame* and *Smart* of, or upon any *Reason*, but what we have thorowly *pondered*, and do firmly *believe*; and together with all this, have engaged by our earnest *Prayers* the God of all Grace to aid and assist us, we may, with some Assurance, promise ourselves a blessed *Issue* and Success: For now we are *fore-warned* of and *fore-armed* against all that can happen to us in our Spiritual Warfare; now there is no Difficulty can arise in our way which we did not *foresee* and *provide against*, when we first set forward to Heaven. So that if from henceforth we do but take an honest Care to watch the Motions of our Enemy, and to keep up our own Hearts and Courage, we cannot miss of a glorious *Victory*, and after that an everlasting *Triumph*.

But if we make a *rash* Beginning, and resolve *precipitantly*, without observing the above-named Rules and Directions, in all probability our *hasty* Purposes will end in a *leisurely* Repentance. So that unless we intend to take a great deal of Pains in Religion to no purpose, to weave a *Penelope*'s Web, and *do*, and *undo* as long as we live, and only to dance round in an eternal Circle of *sinning* and *resolving against* it, *resolving* and *sinning* again, without ever making a Step *forward*, but still *wheeling about* to the same Point; let us now at last resolve to *begin* in that *prudent* Method which God hath prescribed us.

IV. Consider, that when once we have *begun* it *well*, we have conquered the *main* Difficulty of this our Spiritual Warfare: For tho it be an easy Matter to begin *ill*, to resolve against our Sins in a *sudden* Pet, or *transient* Heat of Passion; yet it must be confessed, that to resolve *well*, and *wisely*, that is, with that firm *Belief* and thorow *Consideration* of Things, with that *Shame* and *Sorrow*, and those earnest *Cries* to Heaven for Aid and Assistance, which are necessary to the founding of a *strong* and *lasting* Resolution, is not so easy a Matter: For in all those preparatory Exercises, we have a *roving* Mind, a *hard* Heart, and a *perverse* Nature to contend with; and we shall find it a very hard Matter to call in our *wandring* Thoughts, and unite them together into a *fixt* and *steady* Consideration of the Evidences of the Truth of Religion, and of the Duties and Motives and Difficulties of it. And whilst we are entertaining them with this *unwonted* Argument there are a thousand Objects with which they are better *acquainted*, that will be calling them away; so that without a great deal of Violence to ourselves, we shall never be able to keep them *together* so long, as is necessary to the forming a firm *Assent* to the *Truth*, and the passing a true and impartial *Judgment* upon the *Proposals* of Religion. And when we have fixt our Thoughts into a serious Consideration of the *Evidences* of Religion, we shall find, that our *Lusts* will object much more against them than our *Reason*; that *they* will be casting *Mists* before our Eyes and *bribing* and *byassing* our Understanding the other way; and that thereupon 'twill be more difficult than we are aware, to convince ourselves thorowly of the Truth of a Religion that is so diametrically opposite to our vicious Inclinations: But when this is done, and we proceed to consider the *Duties* of Religion, and to balance the Motives with the Difficulties of them, in order to the obtaining of ourselves a *full* and *free* Consent to them; here again we shall find ourselves at a mighty Plunge: For tho the Motives to our Duty are, at first View, infinitely *greater* and more *considerable* than the Difficulties of it; tho it be unspeakably more *intolerable* to lose the Joys of Heaven, and incur the Pains of Hell, than to endure the *sharpest* Brunts of this Spiritual Warfare; yet *these* being *present* and *sensible*, have a more immediate Access to us, and consequently are apter to move us than either of those Motives, which are both of them *future* and *invisible*. So that unless we do earnestly *press* and *urge* ourselves with *those* Motives, and imprint them upon our Minds in the most *lively* and *real* Characters, we shall find ourselves over-ruled in despight of them, by *these* present and sensible

Difficulties that are before us. But when we have *effectually* convinced ourſelves, that thoſe Difficulties of our Duty are much leſs conſiderable than the Motives to them, we ſhall find it a hard Task to perſuade our Wills into a *free* and *explicit* Conſent to all the *Particulars* of it: For now we ſhall find a ſtrong *Averſation* in our Natures to *ſundry* of thoſe Duties that call for our *Approbation*, and there will be a mighty Counter-ſtriving between our *Reaſon* and *Inclinations*. Our darling Luſts, thoſe Boſom-Orators within us, will now employ all their Rhetorick to diſſuade us from parting with them; they will *claſp* about our Souls, like *departing* Lovers, and uſe all their *Charms* and *Allurements* to hold us faſt, and reconcile themſelves to us; and under theſe Circumſtances, tho we have all the Reaſon in the World on our ſide, we ſhall find it will be no ſuch eaſy matter effectually to diſpoſe our Wills to *cloſe* with ſo many *offenſive* Duties, and *part* with ſo many *beloved* Sins: But when *this* is done, which, to be ſure, will coſt us many a violent *Struggle* and *Contention* with ourſelves, there are *other* Difficulties to be maſtered: For now we muſt *reflect* upon our paſt ill Life, and expoſe it to our own Eyes in all its natural *Horror*, *Turpitude*, and *Infamy*, and never leave reproaching ourſelves with the *Foulneſs* and *Diſingenuity*, the *Madneſs* and *Folly* of it, till we find our Hearts affected with *Shame* and *Sorrow* for, and *Indignation* againſt it. And for us that have been ſo long uſed to *cokes* and *flatter* ourſelves, to *paint* and *varniſh* our Deformities, and crown our Brows with *forced* and *undeſerved* Applauſes; for *us* to *condemn* and *upbraid* ourſelves, to ſtrip our Actions of all their *artificial* Beauty, and ſet ourſelves before our own Eyes in all our *naked, undiſguiſed* Uglineſs, and not look off till we have lookt ourſelves into *Shame* and *Horror*, and *Hatred* of ourſelves, will be, at firſt eſpecially, a very *ungrateful* Employment; and yet it may be a good while, perhaps, before our *hard* and *unmalleable* Hearts will yield to the Impreſſions of *Godly Sorrow* and *Remorſe*: But when this Difficulty is conquered, our Work is not yet *totally* finiſhed: For now we muſt *come off* from ourſelves, and all our *preſumptuous* Dependences upon our own Ability and Power, and in a deep Senſe of our own moſt wretched *Weakneſs* and *Impotency*, throw ourſelves wholly upon God, and with *earneſt* and *importunate* Out-cries, implore his gracious Aid and Aſſiſtence. And let me tell ye, to Men that have been all along inured to ſuch glorious Conceits of themſelves, ſuch mighty Confidences in their own Abilities; that have promiſed themſelves, from time to time, that at *ſuch* and *ſuch* a Time, they would repent and amend, as if, without God's Help, 'twere in *their* Power to repent when they *pleaſed*; for ſuch Men as theſe, I ſay, to come out of themſelves and their own *Self-confidences*, and wholly caſt themſelves upon a foreign Help; ſo ſenſibly to *feel*, and ingenuouſly to *own* their own Inability, as to fly to God, and confeſs themſelves *loſt* and *undone* without him, is a much harder Matter than we can well imagine, till we come to make the Experiment: And yet this, all *this*, muſt be done, before we can be well prepared to *reſolve* upon the *Chriſtian Warfare*.

This I have the longer inſiſted on, becauſe I would deal *plainly* with you, and ſhew you the *worſt* of Things: For whether you are told of it or no, you will find it, if ever you make the Experiment, that all your good *Reſolutions*, without theſe *Preparations*, will ſoon unravel in the *Execution*; and that after you have reſolv'd a thouſand times over, you will be juſt where you are, and not one Step farther in Religion. But for your Encouragement, know, that when, with *theſe* neceſſary Preparations, you have *ſolemnized* your Reſolution, you have won the *main* and *tougheſt* Victory in all your Spiritual Warfare; a Victory by which you have *pulled down* your Sin from its Throne, and *broken* and *diſarrayed* its Power and Forces; ſo that now you are upon the Purſuit of a *flying* Enemy; and if you do but diligently *follow* your Blow, and *purſue* your brave Reſolution thro' all Temptations to the contrary, and do not ſuffer your vanquiſhed Enemy to *rally* and *re-inforce* himſelf againſt ye, you will ſenſibly perceive his Strength decay; and thoſe *Luſts* which

seemed at first *invincible*, will languish away, by degrees, from *weak* to *weaker*, till at last they expire into the Habits of their contrary Virtues; and so proportionably those Virtues, which thro' our vicious Aversations to them, seemed at first *impossible*, will grow on by degrees, from *possible* to *easy*, and from *easy* to *necessary*; and then the *Sins* will be more impossible to us than the *Virtues*.

Now what a mighty Encouragement is this to make a *good Beginning* of the Christian Warfare; that in so doing, we are sure to conquer the *main* Difficulty of it; that when we have broke thro' all those Oppositions that lie in the way to a wise and good Resolution, we are past the *Frontiers* of Religion, and having gotten over those steep *Alps*, at its Entrance shall be sure to find the Region round about a plain and easy *Champain*, in which, the farther we go, the *smoother* 'twill be, and so smoother and smoother, till at last 'twill be all *sweet* and *delightful*, like the flowery Walks of Paradise. Let us therefore be persuaded, without any farther delay, to enter *immediately* upon this our Holy Warfare, and by *Faith* and *Consideration*, &c. to lay the Foundation of a Religious Resolution; that so when we are *actually* engaged against our Spiritual Enemies, we may be able to *stand our ground*, against all Temptations, and that having finally *conquered* and *subdued* them, we may receive that Immortal Crown, which God, the Righteous Judge, hath laid up for the *victorious*.

And so I have done with the *First* Part of our *Christian Warfare*, viz. our *Entrance* into it.

SECT. III.

Concerning the Second *Part of the* Christian Warfare; *with a particular Account of the Duties thereunto appertaining.*

I Shall now proceed to the *Second* Part of our *Christian Warfare*, viz. The *Course* and *Progress* of it, which consists in *Holy Living*: For when once we have reduced our Wills to a *firm* and *well-grounded* Resolution of *entering* into this militant State, that which is next incumbent upon us, is, to *pursue* our Resolution in the future Course of our Lives and Actions; that is, to *abstain* from all Sin, and endeavour to *mortify* our Inclination to it, and to *practise* all the contrary Graces and Virtues, and endeavour to *improve* them to farther and farther Degrees of Perfection; or, as the Scripture expresses it, to *cease to do evil*, and to *learn to do well*; to *strive* against Sin, and to *die* to it, and to *grow in Grace* and *perfect Holiness in the Fear of God.* In this consists the *Course* and *Progress* of our *Christian Warfare.* In order whereunto, it's indispensably necessary, that we should still *repeat* the Practice of those Duties by which we were first *prepared* to enter into it: All those Means by which our good Resolution was *produced*, being naturally conducive to *maintain* and *support* it. And therefore we find, that *Faith* and *Consideration*, &c. are not injoined as *temporary* Duties, that are only to be practised in the *Beginning* of our Warfare, but as Means that will be *always* necessary for us thro'out our whole *Progress* to Heaven: For so we are commanded not only to *acquire* a sincere Faith or Belief of the Gospel, but to *continue* and *be established in it*, Col. i. 2, 3. compared with Chap. ii. 7. And so again, we are injoined not only to *admit* the Proposals of Religion into our Consideration, but to *keep them* there, *Luke* viii. 15. and suffer them *to dwell richly in us*, Col. iii. 16. And so for all those other preparatory Duties: For that from a hearty Conviction of our need of Christ, we should beg all Mercies of God in his *Name*, and for his *sake*, is a standing Precept of Christian Devotion, *John* xvi. 24. and so is also *Confession* of our Sins to God, 1 *John* i. 9. and *Prayer* for his Grace and Assistance, *Col.* iv. 2. Nor is it only required that we should *once* repent or change our bad Resolution for a good one, but that we

ſhould alſo *repeat* and *confirm* our good Reſolution; that we ſhould *ſtabliſh our Hearts*, that is, keep our Wills *fixed* and *determined* to all good Intentions and Purpoſes, *James* v. 8. and *ſtand faſt in the Lord*, that is, adhere to the Profeſſion and Practice of Chriſtianity, with a *firm* and *conſtant* Reſolution, *Phil.* iv. 1. For to *proceed* in our Chriſtian Warfare, is *conſtantly* to live up to our good Reſolution, which will require a continued Application of thoſe Means by which we were firſt *prepared* and *diſpoſed* to enter into it. Thus Faith is no leſs neceſſary to enable us to *perform*, than it was to prepare us to *make* our good Reſolution; and ſtill the more we *believe* our Religion, the more we ſhall think ourſelves concerned in its Propoſals, and conſequently the more firmly we ſhall be reſolved to *cloſe with*, and *embrace* them; and ſo ſtill as our Faith *improves* in degrees of Certainty, our Reſolution will proportionably *grow* ſtronger and ſtronger. Again, if it were neceſſary to the *Birth* of our Reſolution, that we ſhould firſt duly *weigh* and *conſider* the Motives and the Difficulties of the Duties we were reſolving on, then it will be no leſs neceſſary to the *Growth* and *Improvement* of it, that we ſhould frequently conſider over theſe Motives and Difficulties *again*, and balance them one againſt another. And at firſt eſpecially, while our good Reſolution is yet in its *Infancy*, it will be very neceſſary that we ſhould, every Day, before we go abroad into the World, ſpend ſome Portion of Time in *fore-thinking* of the many Temptations that do lie in wait for us, whether in our *Buſineſs* or *Company*, or neceſſary *Refreſhments* and *Diverſions*; and *fore-arming* ourſelves againſt them with the Motives and Arguments of our Religion; that ſo we may have our Weapons ready when-ever they ſhall aſſault us, and be always provided to reſiſt them. Again, if it were neceſſary to the *forming* our Reſolution, that we ſhould be *convinced* of the Neceſſity and Reality of our Saviour's *Mediation*, then it will be no leſs neceſſary to the *Performance* of it, that our Hope and Fear, which are the Springs of our Action, ſhould ſtill be excited by the *glorious* Aſſurance of Mercy, and *horrid* Proſpect of Sin, which this *Conviction* implies. Once more, was it neceſſary to the *well-making* of our Reſolution, that we ſhould affect ourſelves before-hand with a hearty *Shame* and *Sorrow* for our paſt Tranſgreſſions, then will it be no leſs neceſſary for the *ſtrengthening* and *confirming* it, that we ſhould ever and anon *revive* this our Shame or Grief, by reflecting on the Filthineſs of our *paſt* State, and the Weakneſs and Imperfection of our *preſent*, and by an ingenuous *Confeſſion* of both to the high and holy God; that ſo our *Shame* and *Sorrow* for our Sins being digeſted into *Anger* and *Diſpleaſure*, may *ſharpen* our Reſolution, and *animate* it more and more againſt them. In ſhort, if it be neceſſary to the *founding* of our Reſolution, that we ſhould firſt earneſtly *implore* the Divine Grace and Aſſiſtance, then it will be no leſs neceſſary for the *Continuance* of it, that for the ſame purpoſe we ſhould continually apply ourſelves to the Throne of Grace; that we ſhould every Morning commit ourſelves to God's Grace and Protection, and never preſume to venture among the Snares of the World without him; that we ſhall count it as unſafe for us to go out of our Chambers, without being armed with God's Aid, as 'tis to ruſh *naked* into a Battle amongſt Swords and Spears: In a Word, that we ſhould every Morning and Evening, *at leaſt*, recommend ourſelves to God, and beſeech him to defend us againſt all thoſe *Terrors* and *Allurements*, which either the *Devil* or our own *Luſts* ſhall propoſe to withdraw us from our good Reſolution. And if upon all theſe preparatory Exerciſes of our *Faith*, *Conſideration*, &c. it was at firſt neceſſary for us to enter into a ſolemn *Reſolution*, it will be no leſs neceſſary, that with the ſame continued Preparations we ſhould frequently *iterate* and *renew* it, eſpecially *at firſt*; till the Strength of our bad Inclinations is in ſome meaſure *broken* and *abated*. Now we ſhould take care to go every Day out of our Chambers, *freſh* armed, as Men that expect an Enemy at the Threſhold; and not to truſt our *weak* Souls among the Temptations of the World, till we have firſt *chained* up our Inclinations with *new* Vows of

 Fidelity:

Fidelity: So that you see the Duties of our *Entrance* into the Christian Warfare are not so *peculiar* to that State, but that they are also to be practised in the *Course* and *Progress* of it.

But then besides *these*, there are sundry *others* that are necessary to our successful *Progress* therein: All which I shall reduce to these following Heads:

1. That we take care to arm ourselves with *Patience* and *Courage* to undergo and encounter the *Trouble* and *Difficulty* of it.
2. That we *propose* to ourselves the most excellent *Examples*.
3. That we apply ourselves to our *Spiritual Guides* for Direction.
4. That we be very curious of our *Aims* and *Intentions*.
5. That we should possess our Minds with a *lively* Sense and *awful* Apprehension of God's *Presence* with, and *Inspection* over us.
6. That we frequently *examine* and *review* our own Actions.
7. That we be very *watchful* and *circumspect* in the *Conduct* and *Managemeut* of ourselves.
8. That we should betake ourselves to some *honest Calling*, and behave ourselves *diligently* and *industriously* therein.
9. That we should endeavour after a *chearful* Frame of Spirit.
10. That we should maintain in our Minds a constant *Sense*, and *Expectation* of *Heaven*.
11. That we should live in the constant Use of the *external Ordinances* and *Institutions* of our Religion.

I. To the *Course* and *Progress* of our Christian Warfare, it is necessary that we arm ourselves with *Patience* and *Courage* to undergo and encounter the *Troubles* and *Difficulties* of it: For so we are commanded to *be strong in the Lord*, Ephes. vi. 10. and *to be strong in the Grace which is in Christ Jesus*, 2 Tim. ii. 1. that is, To *fortify* ourselves with the Grace of God and the Motives of Religion, against all those *Hardships* and *Oppositions* which may rise up against us in our March to Heaven; for we are assured beforehand, that *we have need of Patience; that after we have done the Will of God, we may receive the Promise*, Heb. x. 36. and therefore we are bid to *strengthen ourselves, with all Patience and Long-suffering with Joyfulness*, Col. i. 11. and *to run with Patience the Race that is set before us*, Heb. xi. 1.

For tho it is certain, that when we have well and wisely *resolved*, the *greatest* Difficulty of our Spiritual Warfare is over, yet it cannot be dissembled, that even when this is *performed*, and we proceed from hence to *Execution*, there will, *at first* especially, arise such Difficulties and Oppositions in our way, as will sufficiently try our *Courage* and *Patience*. And tho if when we were forming our Resolution, we considered the whole Matter, we could not but *foresee* great Difficulties in the Execution of it, And be very sensible what strong Inclinations from *within*, and, Temptations from *without* we were to *struggle* and *contend* with; yet, alas! the Difficulties of all Undertakings are usually much less in our *Fore-sight*, than in our *Sense* and *Experience* of them: For while they are in our Fore-sight, we have only the *Notions* and *Ideas* of them to encounter, and these being not so stubborn as *the Things themselves*, are much more easily conquered by us. So that when instead of our own *easy* and *compliant* Notions we come to contend with the Difficulties *themselves*, we very often find the Face of Things quite *changed*, and those Difficulties which did so easily *submit* to our *Apprehensions*, do many times make an obstinate *Resistance* to our *Endeavours*. And thus many times it is in the Matter in hand: So that when we are *fore-casting* the Difficulties of Religion in our Minds, we must always allow for the *Distance* of them, which usually *lessens* their Appearance; and conclude with ourselves, that when we are *actually* engaged with them, we *find* them much more *stiff* and *incompliant* to our *Endeavours* than they are now to our *Thoughts*; and accordingly *prepare* and *arm* ourselves against them: For when from *considering* we proceed to *encounter* them, we must expect to find, that to *discourse* and *execute*,

execute, are Things of a widely different Nature; and that those Difficulties which we so easily *vanquished* in our Thoughts and Discourses, will, when we are actually *contending* with them put us to a much harder Trial of our *Valour* and *Constancy* than we were aware of.

For if we would have nothing but our own bad Inclinations, and the ordinary Temptations of the World to struggle with, yet even *these* we shall find sufficient to exercise our utmost *Patience* and *Constancy:* For we must not expect that our bad Inclinations, especially after they have been *pampered* and *improved* by a long and frequent Repetition of *forbidden* Enjoyments, will be presently *subdued* and *mortified*, when there are so many Temptations all around us continually *exciting* and *provoking* them. No, you may be assured they will *struggle* for their Lives before they give up the Ghost; and if they are deeply radicated, will not be torn from their Roots without a great deal of *Time* and *Labour*. So that unless you have a *great* Stock of Patience and Courage to *endure* and *outstand* their tedious Resistances to your pious Endeavours, and to deny them those vicious Satisfactions which they *feed* and *live* upon, till you have *starved* them out; you will quickly be *weary* of contending with them, and rather choose to yield them their *Desires*, than be plagued with their restless *Importunities*.

But then, besides these *ordinary* Difficulties of denying your sinful Desires and Inclinations, it may be your Lot to *take up the Cross* too, and to follow your Saviour thro' a dark Lane of *Sufferings*, and *Persecutions*; and then you will need a *world* of Patience and Courage to undergo all that *Shame* and *Reproach*, *Loss* and *Pain*, *Fear* and *Suffering*, thro' which you must fight your way to Heaven if ever you come there. Since therefore this *may* happen to ye, and is not altogether *unlikely*, it concerns ye, as ye hope for Heaven, to *fore-arm* and *prepare* yourselves against it. So that our Christian Warfare exposing us, as it doth, to so many *certain* and *probable* Difficulties, it is not without reason that the Apostle exhorts us to be *stedfast and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.*

II. To the *Course* and *Progress* of our Christian Warfare, it is necessary that we *propose* to ourselves the most excellent *Examples:* For Experience tells us, that good *Example* hath a stronger Influence upon Men than good *Precepts or Counsels*; and the reason is plain, because he that only gives others good Advice or Instructions, doth not give them that Security that he believes *himself*, as he that *seconds* his Counsel with his own Example. For they who are instructed do, in a great measure, depend upon the Judgment and Authority of their Teachers, and therefore must have a reasonable *Security* that their Teachers do believe *themselves* before they will be induced to *believe* and *comply* with what they are taught; and such a Security is not to be fetcht so much from their *Words* as from their Actions. But when by their Examples they *transcribe* their own Doctrines, it is visible they are *in earnest*, and that is a probable Argument to their Disciples that their Doctrine is *true*. So that good Example teaches with greater *Force* and *Authority* than good Doctine can do, because it more *sensibly* confirms what it teaches, and doth at the same Time *direct* us what to do, and by a very popular Argument *prove*, that we *ought* to do it. Besides, when the matter which the Teacher advises or injoins is *hard* and *difficult*, he ought, for the Encouragement of those whom he teaches, to give them a full Assurance that 'tis *practacible*; which no Argument will so *effectually* do as his own Example. For when they see that he himself *practises* what he *teaches*, that is an *ocular* Demonstration to them that 'tis *practicable*. So that good Example carries in it this strong Encouragement to Goodness, that there is nothing in it but what is *possible*, and that the greatest Difficulties that attend it are such as may be *conquered* by Diligence and sincere Endeavour. And as it gives us the most *sensible* Direction and Encouragement to Virtue, so it also represents it to us to the greatest *Advantage*.

tage. And whereas Precepts and Discourses of Virtue are only the *Pictures* and *Artificial* Descriptions of it, a virtuous Example is Virtue *animated* and exposed to our view in all its *living* Charms and Attractions. And therefore by how much Nature *exceeds* Art, and the most accomplished Beauties *excel* their Statues and Pictures, by so much is Virtue in Examples more *amiable* and *attractive* than in Precepts and Discourses. Since therefore in good Examples we see Virtue *alive* and *in Motion;* exerting itself in the most *comely* Actions and *grateful* Gestures, this must much more effectually *recommend* and *indear* it to our Minds and Affections than the most *pressing* Discourses or *lively* Descriptions of it.

This therefore is one of those great Means of holy Living, which the Gospel hath prescribed us, *viz.* That we should propose to ourselves the best and most excellent Examples; That *we should be followers of them who thro' Faith and Patience inherit the Promises,* Heb. vi. 12. and that we should be *Followers* of the Apostles, and Leaders of the Flock of Christ *as they were of Christ himself,* 1 Cor. xi. 1. But because the Examples of the *best* of Men have a great many Imperfections in them, and are very often intermixt either with *Excesses* or *Defects,* and tainted with *Superstition* and *Enthusiasm,* by reason whereof they frequently mislead those that tread too close upon the Heels of them; therefore we are more particularly directed to the Example of the great Master of our Religion; which, tho it consists of an *unspotted* Innocence and *perfect* Virtue, yet is every way *accommodated* to the State and Condition of Human Nature and Conversation. For he conversed among Men with a *modest* Virtue, and such as was every way consistent with an *ordinary* Course of Life. His Piety was *even* and *constant,* and *unblameable,* but such as fairly *complied* with *civil* Society and a *secular* Conversation. It affected not high *Transports,* and *Raptures* of Devotion, but was such as was both *fit* and *easy* for Mortals to imitate. His Virtue consisted not in *prodigious* Fastings, or *sowre* and *unpracticable* Abstractions from Sense, but in a Life of *Justice* and *Temperance,* of *Humility,* and *Charity,* and *Patience* and the like; that is, in such a Life as is not only *proper* but *possible* for us to transcribe. So that in his glorious Example he hath transmitted to us an *imitable* Virtue; for he took care not to *out-run* the Capacities of Men in imitable Expressions of Sanctity and Virtue, but so far as he could *innocently,* *complied* with our Weakness, and *kept pace* with our Strength; that so he might entertain us all along with the Comforts of his *Company,* and the Influence of a perpetual *Guide.* And as that Rule of Faith which he hath propounded to us, is fitted to our Understandings, being very *short,* *easy,* and *intelligible;* so, as an excellent Writer of our own hath observed, that Copy of Manners which he hath set before us, is not fitted with Excellencies *worthy,* but also with Compliances *possible* to be imitated by us.

And as his Example is all *imitable,* so it is all thro'out *substantially* good. For it consisted in a *modest* Piety, a *simple* and *unaffected* Goodness. His Devotions to God never affected the *Stage,* nor did they ever evaporate in *Enthusiastick* Rants, or *unaccountable* Raptures of Passion; but were always *secret* and *serious,* *calm* and *manly,* animated with a *seraphick* Fervor, and yet conducted with *Reason* and *Sobriety.* His Government of himself was *exact* and *regular,* his Affections were always fixt to their proper *Objects,* and never exceeded the just *Limits* of Reason; and his *Appetites* were always moderated by his *Understanding,* and never transgressed the bounds of *Temperance* and *Nature.* His Conversation among Men was most *innocent* and *candid,* *free* and *ingenuous;* neither *vain,* nor *morose,* *haughty* nor *sordid,* but equally poised between all Extremes. He was *just* without Partiality, *humble* without Affectation, *charitable* and *beneficent* without Noise or Respect of Persons. His Zeal was *wise,* *temperate,* and *substantial,* such as did not spend itself in a furious *Contention* for, or *Opposition* to Things of an indifferent Nature, but it quietly submitted to the Customs of his Country, and of the Church in which he was born

and educated; and all his Invectives were against *Hypocrisy* and *Immorality*, which were the only Things to which his noble and generous Temper could never be reconciled. In a word, his whole Religion was *modest* and *serious*, and affected rather to be *seen* than to be *heard*, and to *be* than to be *seen*. His Heavenly-mindedness was such as render'd him neither too *sowre*, nor too *talkative*; and his Patience was always equally distant from *Stupidity* and *Effeminacy*. For so when he endured that miserable Death of the Cross, he suffered like a Man that was *sensible* of Pain, and yet very well knew how to *undergo* it as *became* him. For as, on the one hand, he did not breathe out his Soul like an *effeminate* Epicure, in *whining* Complaints and *wretched* Lamentations; so neither, on the other hand, did he give up the Ghost like a *flanting* Stoick in a *huffing* Contempt of Death, or an *affected* Insensibility of Pain, and Misery. But from the beginning to the end he acted his Part in that bloody Tragedy, as one that was neither *Insensible* of Torment, nor *conquered* by it. For the last Words which he breathed, which were a hearty Prayer for his Murmurers, manifested his Soul to be *calm* and *serene* under all the Agonies of his Body. Thus is his great Example entirely composed of those excellent Virtues, that are the proper Graces and Ornaments of human Nature. Now tho there be some Actions of our Saviour's Life, which were never intended for our *Imitation*, *viz.* such wherein he either *exercised* or *proved* and *asserted* his Divine Authority; yet whatsoever he did of precise *Morality*, and in pursuance to his own *Laws* he *designed* and *intended* for our Imitation. So that in all such Matters, as his *Law* is to be our *Map* and *Rule*, so his *Practice* is to be our *Guide* and *President*.

For this is the great End of our Religion, to which God hath *predestinated* us, namely to be *conformable to the Image of his Son*, Rom. viii. 29. and in this consists our *putting on of the Lord Jesus Christ*, namely, in *imitating* his Manners, and *following* the Garb and Fashion of his Conversation; and accordingly our Saviour tells his Disciples, *John* xiii. 15. *I have given you an Example* (that is, of Humility and Charity) *that you should do as I have done to you*; and 'tis one of his great Commands that we should *learn of him who was meek and lowly of heart*, with a promise, that in so doing, *we should find rest unto our Souls*, Mat. xi. 29.

Wherefore if we would lead a Holy Life, pursuant to our Holy Resolution, we must set holy Examples before our Eyes, and especially that most holy one of our blessed Saviour. We must *peruse* the History of his sacred Life, and diligently *observe* his Carriage and Demeanour in all those Capacities and Circumstances wherein he was placed, and closely *apply* it all to ourselves as a perfect Pattern of Action. *Thus* and *thus* did my Saviour, *Sic ille manus, sic ora* —— *so* he demeaned himself when he was in my Circumstances, after *this manner* he acted, and *thus* he suffered; and can I follow a more *glorious* Example; nay, would it not be a burning Shame for me not to *imitate* his *Manners* whilst I profess myself his *Disciple*? Think, O my Soul, what would he have now done, if he were in *thy* Condition, and had *thy* Temptations before him. Would he have *pawned* his Innocence for such a *Trifle*, or *prostituted* himself to such a *base*, *infamous* Action, to avoid such an *inconsiderable* Inconvenience? No, doubtless he *would not*; and art thou not ashamed to *comply* with such a Temptation, knowing with what Indignation thy Saviour would have *rejected* it? If we would but thus inure ourselves to *reflect* upon our Saviour's Example, and *apply* it to, and *compare* it with our own Actions, we cannot imagine with what a divine *Emulation* it would inspire us; how it would *animate* our Weaknesses, and *shame* our Irregularities, and *enamour* our Souls with true Virtue and Goodness.

III. To the *Course* and *Progress* of our Christian Warfare, it is also necessary that we should frequently apply ourselves for *Advice* and *Direction* to our *spiritual Guides*: For it is to be considered, that Men of a *secular* Life and Conversation are generally so engaged in the Business and Affairs of this World,

World, that they very rarely acquire Skill enough in Religion to conduct themselves safely to Heaven thro' all those Difficulties and Temptations that lie in their way. For before they can be capable to guide themselves safely, they must in all points of great moment be able to distinguish between *Truth* and *Falshood*, and to make a difference between *good* and *evil*, which in many Instances do border so *near upon* one another, that it requires much greater Skill and Knowledge, than the Generality of Men are Masters of, to discern the *Point* and *Boundary* that parts them. And supposing their *Understandings* to be so well instructed as to be able to resolve them truly in all those doubtful Cases wherein they are or may be concerned, yet still there is generally such a fault in their *Wills*, as renders them incompetent Judges for themselves; and that is, That thro' an Excess of *Self-love* they are prone to be *partial* in their own Concerns; and consequently, unless the Case be very *plain*, to vote that *true* that is most for their Interest, and *determine* on that side they are most inclined to. For when a Man's Judgment is before in *Suspence*, a very *small* weight of Interest on the *wrong* side of the Question, usually turns the Scale against the *greater* probability on the *right*. And whilst Interest *fees* Mens Affections, and their Affections *bribe* their Judgments, it will be almost impossible for them to secure their Innocence whilst they determine all Cases of Right and Wrong, at the Tribunal of their own Reason. For when once they have determined *falsly* (as *many Times* to be sure they will) besides the many single Miscarriages in *Practice* that will be consequent thereunto; by practising on upon their *false* Determinations, they will intangle themselves in such evil *Customs* and *Habits*, as by that time they have *discovered* the Error of their *Judgment*, will render it very difficult for them to *correct* the Error of their Practice. And therefore to secure ourselves in our Innocence and Duty, it is mighty necessary, that in all doubtful Cases we should appeal from *ourselves* to the Judgment of *others*, who having no Interest to *bias* them one way or t'other, will be much more *impartial*, and therefore (if they have but *equal* understanding) more *competent* Judges of our Case than ourselves.

Upon both which Accounts the Christian Religion hath wisely *separated* an Order of Men from the World, to be the *Guides* and *Conductors* of Souls, to *oversee* and *direct* the secular Flock, who upon the above-mentioned Accounts cannot be supposed to be in *all* Cases competent Guides for themselves. For 'twas to this purpose that our Saviour before his Ascension, commissioned his Disciples, *Mat.* xxviii. 18, 19, 20. *All Power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth. Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all Things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World.* And that he did not intend this merely for a *temporary* Commission which was to *expire* with the first *Bishops* and *Propagators* of the Gospel, but designed to have it *derived* from their Hands to all the *succeeding* Ages of Christianity, is evident not only from the Promise annexed to it, that *he would be with them to the end of the World*, which plainly shews that 'twas to continue in force till *then*; but also from hence, that they to whom this Commission was *immediately* given, did *actually* derive it to others, 2 *Tim.* i. 6. with a strict Charge that *these* also should *successively* derive it to others, *Tit.* i. 5.

And as by this *perpetual* Commission Christ hath established a Succession of Men to be the *Guides* of Souls to the end of the World, so he hath obliged all Christian People to *attend to* and *respect* them as such. For *he that heareth you*, saith he, *heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me*, Luke x. 16. And 1 Cor. iv. 1. the Apostle injoins all Christians *to account of these spiritual Guides as of the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God*; so also, 1 *Thes.* v. 12, 13. he earnestly *beseeches them*, as a matter of vast importance, *that they would know them which labour among them, and are over them in the Lord, and were to admonish them, and*

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esteem them very highly in love for their works sake; and *Heb.* xiii. 17. he gives this Injunction, *Obey them which have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your Souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you.*

There being therefore an Order of Men that are thus *sanctified* and *set apart* from the World, by the Commission of our Saviour, to *consult* the various Necessities of Souls, and *administer* to them in all their religious Concerns; it would doubtless mightily contribute to their successful *Progress* in the Christian Warfare, if in all their *Streights* and *Difficulties* Men would *apply* themselves to them for Counsel and Direction, with such Modesty and Sincerity as they ought to do. For besides that they might reasonably expect a greater *Blessing* upon *their* Counsels than *other* Mens, they being *commissioned* Guides under the great Shepherd of Souls, who, we must needs suppose, will more especially *cooperate* with the Means of his own Ordination; besides this, I say, they being Persons that are wholly *devoted* to the Study and Ministries of Religion, must needs be supposed, *cæteris paribus*, to have a farther *Insight* into the Cases of Souls, into their *Dangers* and *Refuges*, *Diseases* and *Remedies*, and consequently to be better able to *counsel* and *direct* them, than Men of a *secular* Life and Conversation. If therefore Men would be but so kind to themselves, as to apply themselves, in all their spiritual Exigences, to a *holy*, *wise*, and *well-instructed* Guide; to *uncover* their Sores, *lay open* their Cases, and *reveal* the Secrets of their Souls to him, so far as it is necessary to enable him to make proper Applications; it is not to be expressed what a *vast* Advantage they might make of him. He would be instead of a *good Genius* or *Tutelar Angel* to their Souls, to suggest many a good *Thought* to them, and feed their Meditations with many an useful *Notion*; to enable them to *extract* from the Articles of their Belief, their just and proper Inferences, and *reduce* them to practical Principles, to *rectify* their Wandring, and *extricate* them from their Doubts; to *comfort* them in their Sorrows, and *quicken* them in their Indispositions; to *warm* their Indifferences, and *moderate* their Zeal, so as that they may neither be *becalmed* by the one, nor *over-born* by the too violent Gusts of the other; and, in a word, to direct them to the proper Methods of *Mortifying* their bad Inclinations, and *conducting* their Religion so, as to render it more *easy* and *delightful* to them. These and a great many other good Offices a *wise* and *well-experienced* Guide would be able to do Men, if they would but take him along with them in their *Journey* to Heaven, and *modestly* submit themselves to his Conduct and Direction. And in thus doing they would act not only with greater *Security* to their Innocence, but with greater *Satisfaction* to their Consciences; because then their Actions would be warranted, not only by their *private* Sentiments, which in many Cases they will have just cause to suspect, but also by the *better* and more *impartial* Judgment of an *authorized* Guide. For if under *his* Conduct they should happen in any doubtful Instance to err from the way of Truth or Righteousness, they will have this Satisfaction, that they have used the *best* Means to *prevent* it, the Means to which God himself hath *remitted* them, to whom alone they are accountable for their Actions, and who, as they may well imagine, will very much *compassionate* such Miscarriages as may follow upon their Submission to his own Appointments. But if notwithstanding the great Care that he hath taken of their Souls, in appointing them *Pilots* to steer them safely to Heaven, they will *embark* without them, and presume so far upon their own Skill, as to venture to their eternal *Port*, thro' all those *Rocks* and *Quicksands* that lie in their way; they must needs be in great danger of miscarrying, which if they do, they may thank *themselves* for it, and can expect no *Pity* from God, whose careful provision for their eternal Safety they have so ungratefully *contemned* and *neglected*.

IV. To our prosperous *Course* and *Progress* in the Christian Warfare, it is also necessary that, as often as we can, we should actually *intend* and *aim at*

God in the Courſe of our Lives and Actions. For it is of mighty Advantage to the Conduct of a Man's Life to have his *Intentions* united, and continually to act with *one* ſteady *Drift* and *Aim*. Becauſe while he intends but *one thing*, he unites the whole *Vigour* of his Nature in the purſuit of it, and is continually driving at it with all the *Force* and *Activity* of his Faculties. 'Tis an *Italian* Proverb, *From the Man of one Buſineſs, good Lord deliver me*; becauſe, minding *that* only, he muſt needs be ſuppoſed to be more *expert* and *ſagacious* in it, and conſequently the more able to *exceed* and *over-reach* another Man who hath only minded it by the *bye*; but when a Man acts with a multifarious Intention, he muſt needs be *diſtracted* in his Operations, and the force of his Faculties being *divided* by the multiplicity of his Aims, muſt needs be ſo *weakned*, that 'twill be impoſſible for him to purſue any one of them with *Vigour* and *Activity*. 'Tis one of *Pythagoras*'s Maxims, Δεῖ ϗ τ ἄνθρωπον ἕνα γίνεσθαι, *a Man ought to be one*, *i. e.* ſo far as he is able, to fix all his *Aims* upon one *End*, and unite them in one *Center*, and not to ſuffer himſelf to be toſſed hither and thither by *Independent* Deſigns and Intentions; becauſe this will unavoidably *diſtract* him in his Proſecutions, and ſo *divide* and *weaken* his Principles of Action, that he will be able to do nothing to any Purpoſe. God therefore being the great Object of Religion, it is neceſſary, in order to our progreſs therein, that we ſhould, as much as in us lies, *reſpect* and *aim* at him in the whole Courſe of our Actions; that we ſhould continually *look up* to him as to the directing Star by which we are to *ſteer* our Motions, and conduct our whole Lives under a fixt Intention to *obey* his Will, and *imitate* his Nature.

And, indeed, unleſs we do this, we are not good Men in the Senſe and Judgment of Religion. For Religion, as ſuch, is a Rule of Divine *Worſhip*; and under this Notion the Chriſtian Religion, in particular, enjoys all its Duties, *viz.* of *Homage* and *Worſhip*, to God. For it requires us to *do all as unto God*, Col. iii. 23. and *to do all to the glory of God*, 1 Cor. x. 31. that is, to do all in *Obedience* to him, and *Imitation* of him, from a ſincere Acknowledgment of the Perfections of his Nature, of his Sovereign Authority over us, and an immutable Right to rule and command us. Not that an *actual, explicit* Intention of *obeying* or *imitating* God is neceſſary to every good Action; for our occaſions of doing good, being ſo *infinite*, and ſo often occurring in our ſecular Affairs, and our Minds being ſo incapable, as they are, of attending *many* Things at *once*; it is impoſſible for us actually to intend Obedience to God in *every* good thing we perform; but that, in the *general*, we ſhould heartily intend it, is indiſpenſably neceſſary to the conſecrating our beſt Actions, and adopting them into the Family of Religion. For that we muſt obey God, is the Fundamental Law of Religion, from whence all the particular Commands and Prohibitions of it do receive their Force and Obligation. So that unleſs we do what he commands with a *general Intention* of Mind to obey him, we do not act upon a Religious Obligation, and conſequently tho our Actions ſhould be *materially* Good, yet are they not *formally* Religious.

Now to the fixing and ſettling ſuch a *general Intention* in our Minds, it is neceſſary that in the particular Exerciſes of our Religion we ſhould, ſo far as we are able, *actually intend* and *aim* at God; that we ſhould throw by all other Ends, ſo far as we are able, and refer our Actions *directly* and *immediately* to him; in a word, that we ſhould *formally devote* and *dedicate* them to his bleſſed Will and Pleaſure, ſo as to be able to ſay, *this* and *this* I do *purely* to pleaſe God, with a *ſingle Intention* of Soul, to *reſemble* and pleaſe him, to tranſcribe his Nature, and comply with his Will. For which end we muſt take care, as oft as we can, to perform our Religious Actions in ſuch a manner, as that no *ſecular* Ends may interpoſe between God and our Intentions; to be as *private* and as *modeſt* as we can in our Religion, and not expoſe it any more than needs muſt to the Eye of the World, leſt *Applauſe* and *Reputation*

tation ſhould intrude themſelves upon us, and carry away our *Intention* from God. For thus our Saviour adviſes in the Caſe of Charity and Prayer, *Mat.* vi. 1, 7. That *we ſhould not do our Alms before Men, to be ſeen of them,* nor *ſound a Trumpet before them,* to make the Street ring of our Charity; nay, if poſſible, *that we ſhould not let our left Hand know what our right Hand doth*; but that our Alms ſhould be *ſecret,* and known only to God and ourſelves; and that when we *pray,* we ſhould not affect to make a pompous ſhew of it, *in the Synagogues and corners of the Streets,* but *that we ſhould enter into our Cloſets and ſhut our Door,* and in the moſt private manner unboſom our Souls to God; the ſenſe of all which is, that we ſhould endeavour, as far as in us lies, ſo to *circumſtantiate* our Charity and Devotion, as not to give any Opportunity to ſecular Ends and Aims to obtrude themſelves upon us, to *mingle* with our pious *Intentions,* and *deflower* the Purity of them.

Not that I think it *unlawful* for a Man to intend any thing but God in the Diſcharge of his Duty, or that our Intention is *bad,* when it immediately reſpects any *worldly* End, ſuch as Pleaſure, or Profit, or Honour, which are propoſed by God himſelf as Arguments to perſuade Men to their Duty; and what hurt can it be for Men to *aim* at that in the Diſcharge of their Duty, which God hath propoſed to them as an *Encouragement* to it? 'Tis true, if worldly Advantage be the *only* or *chief* End we aim at, our *Intention* is naught, and ſo are all the *Actions* thence proceeding; but if, together with that, we do heartily *intend* and *aim* to pleaſe God, and conform ourſelves to his bleſſed Will and Nature, as to continue in the path of our Duty to him, not only when we have no proſpect of outward Advantages to induce us to it, but when outward Evils and Inconveniencies lie in our way, we need not doubt but our Intention is truly *good* and *ſincere,* notwithſtanding thoſe immediate Reſpects which it many Times hath to *ſecular* Ends and Inducements. But yet it is certain that the *more* it reſpects theſe, the more *imperfect* it is, and the more liable to be vanquiſhed by outward Temptations. For it's a plain ſign that 'tis conſcious of its own Weakneſs, when it dares not ſtand alone, but is fain to call in to it the Aſſiſtance of theſe worldly Ends to ſupport and defend it; and the leſs of worldly Aim there is in our Religious Intention, to be ſure the more *pure* and *ſimple* it is, and the more of *ſubſtantial* Piety there is in it; and tho it may be truly ſincere notwithſtanding its being *compounded* with ſecular Aims and Reſpects, yet the more of theſe there is in it, the *weaker* and more *unſtable* it muſt neceſſarily be. For our Mind being *finite,* cannot poſſibly intend many Things, with *equal* Strength and Vigour, as it can do *one*; and when its Intention is *diſperſed* among various Objects, it muſt neceſſarily be more *languid* than when 'tis *collected, united,* and *fixt* upon one; and conſequently, the *more* a Man's Intention reſpects the World, the *leſs,* in proportion, it muſt reſpect God; and ſo on the contrary. And then the leſs a Man reſpects *God* in his Duty, and the more he reſpects the *World,* the more liable he will be to the Temptations of worldly Loſs or Advantage. For when thoſe Advantages which he ſo much reſpects lie on the *oppoſite* ſide to his Duty, to be ſure he will be ſo much the more *inclined* to deſert it; and as often as Fortune ſhifts ſides, and carries with it the Advantages of Pleaſure, Profit, or Honour, from *Virtue* to *Vice,* or from *Vice* to *Virtue,* he will ſtill be ready to *face about* with it, and be always *veering* like a Weather-cock to a contrary Point upon every Change of Wind. Whereas when a Man's Intention *purely* reſpects God, 'twill be *immoveably* fixt among all the Changes and Alterations from without. For there is no outward Change or *Capricio* of Fortune can hinder a Man from pleaſing God, whoſe Love to us depends not upon our being *poor* or *rich, pleaſed* or *pained, depreſſed* or *advanced,* but upon our being truly *Virtuous* and *Religious.* And therefore if our Aim be *purely* to pleaſe him, we ſhall be ſure to continue ſo, which ſide ſoever Fortune ſmiles upon.

Wherefore to our ſucceſsful Progreſs in Religion it is highly neceſſary that, ſo far as in us lies, we ſhould *abſtract* and *ſeparate* our Religious Intentions from all theſe *worldly* Reſpects; and this muſt be done by looking frequently up to God, and actually *referring* and *dedicating* our Actions to him; by ſhutting our Eyes, when we are entering upon any Duty, to all worldly Conſiderations, and determining with ourſelves, *this* I will do purely becauſe 'tis *Godlike*, or becauſe God hath *commanded* it; whether I ſhall be *commended* or *diſgraced* for it, whether I ſhall *get* or *loſe* by it, I will not now regard; it is ſufficient that it is *good*, and that God hath commanded it, and therefore for this Reaſon *only* I will do it, without any other Reſpect or Conſideration. By which Means we ſhall by degrees ſo *purify* our Intentions, and *refine* them from worldly Aims, that we ſhall be able to act *vigorouſly* in Religion, without any other Reſpect but that of *pleaſing* God, and *conforming* ourſelves to his Will and Nature. And when once we can do thus, we are in a great forwardneſs in Religion. For now the Will of *God* hath got ſuch an Aſcendant over *ours*, that as we can chearfully obey him without *external* Inducements, ſo we can freely contemn all Inducements *to the contrary*, and it being our *great* and *chief* Aim to *pleaſe* and be *like* him, the Things that are *without* us will have very little Power to move us one way or t'other. Becauſe now our great Aim is *above* them, and our Eyes are ſo ſtedfaſtly *fixt* upon God, that we are not at leiſure to *regard* them. And our Mind being thus *indiſpoſed* to liſten to the reſtleſs Importunities of *external* Goods and Evils, our Innocence is ſafe, and we may paſs triumphantly thro' all their Temptations. 'Tis a noble Saying of *Epictetus*, lib. 2. c. 19. ὐκ ἐστιν ἄλλως ἐκβαλεῖν λύπην, φόβον, ἐπιθυμίαν, &c. εἰ μὴ πρὸς μόνον τὸν Θεὸν ἀποβλέποντα, ἐκείνῳ μόνῳ προσπεπονθότα, τοῖς ἐκείνου προστάγμασι καθωσιωμένον. *i. e.* "There is no other way for a Man to eject Sorrow, and Fear, and "Luſt from his Soul, but by looking up to God alone, and reſigning "ourſelves to him only, and devoting our Lives to the Obedience of "his Commandments." And elſewhere he tells his Scholars, that the main thing which he drove at was, Ἀποτελέσαι ὑμᾶς ἐλευθέρους, εὐδαιμονοῦντας, εἰς Θεὸν ἀφορῶντας, ἐν παντὶ μικρῷ καὶ μεγάλῳ, *i. e.* "To make them free and bleſſed, by perſuading them to look up to God in every thing whether it be ſmall or great, "*lib.* 2. *c.* 19." For whilſt in our religious Intentions we do *too much* reſpect the Things that are without us, we do, in a great meaſure, *intruſt* them with our Virtue and Religion; and ſo far as we make them Inducements to our Duties, ſo far it is in their Power to *ſecure* or *betray* it. As for Inſtance, ſo much as I am at *Profit* in any *religious* Action, ſo much *Power* Profit hath over my Religion; and if the ſame Profit ſhould invite me to a *wicked* Action, it will have as much Power to *betray* my Religion, as it had to *ſecure* it; for the ſame Gain will have the ſame Influence on me when it tempts me to *ſin*, as it hath when it tempts me to *obey*. What a dangerous thing therefore is it for Men to intruſt ſuch a Treaſure as their Innocence and Religion in ſuch *irreſponſible* Hands, and to give thoſe outward Things which are the Temptations of *Vice*, a power to diſpoſe of their *Virtue*? What is this but to commit the keeping of our *Sheep* to a *Wolf*, or of our *Chaſtity* to a *Goat*? Wherefore as we would be ſafe in our religious *Progreſs*, it highly concerns us to *purify* our good Intentions, ſo far as we are able, from all *worldly* Reſpects, and to level them *directly* and *immediately* at God. And in order hereunto,

V. To render the *Courſe* and *Progreſs* of our Chriſtian Warfare ſucceſsful, it is alſo neceſſary that we poſſeſs our Minds with an awful Apprehenſion of God's *Preſence* with, and *Inſpection* over us. Among the many excellent Rules which the Heathen Moraliſts have given for the Conduct of Men's Lives, this is one, That in the whole Courſe of their Lives they ſhould imagine ſome *excellent Perſon*, for whom they have a great *Veneration*, to be preſent with 'em, as a *Witneſs* and *Spectator* of all their Actions. And it was wholeſom Advice that one gave his *lewd* Friend, that he ſhould hang the

 Picture

Picture of his *grave* and *serious* Father in the Room where he was wont to celebrate his *Debauches*; imagining that the *severe Eye* of the good old Man, tho but in *Effigy*, would give a check to the *wanton* Sallies of the intemperate Youth. And if the bare *Fiction* of a Man's being *present* with us, or his being present only in a *dead* Picture, may be rationally supposed to have so strong an Influence on our Actions; of how much greater Force must our firm *Belief* and *Sense* of God's Presence with us be to regulate our Lives and Actions; and that he is thus *present* with us, we have sufficient Reason to conclude, not only from the infinite *Plenitude* of his Essence, which being *self-existent*, could not be *bounded* or *limited* by any Cause from without, and therefore must necessarily be *boundless* and *immense*; but also from express Assertions of Scripture,. which assures us, *that his Eyes are in every Place, beholding the Evil and the Good*, Prov. xv. 3. *That he is a God at hand, and not a God afar off; and that no Man can hide himself in secret Places that he shall not see him; and that he fills Heaven and Earth*, Jer. xxiii. 23, 24. *and that we can go no whither from his Presence*, Psal. cxxxix. 7, 8. *and that all Things are naked and open to his Eyes*, Heb. iv. 13. that is, That the world is *surrounded* and *filled* with his Being, which is both the *Womb* that *contains*, and the *Soul* that *pervades* the Creation; and that being thus *present* with us where-ever we are, he must needs be supposed to have a constant *Inspection* over us, and a clear *Sense* and *Perception* of whatsoever we do.

And he being thus present with us in *Reality*, and not in *Fiction* or *Picture*, it must doubtless be of mighty avail to the Well-government of our Lives, to be continually inspired with an *actual* and *vigorous* Sense of it. And therefore our Saviour commands us to do good from a lively Sense, that God's Eye is upon us, *Mat.* vi. 4, 6. *That our Father, who sees us in secret, shall reward us openly.* And this I conceive to be the meaning of that comprehensive Precept which God gave to *Abraham, Walk before me, and be thou perfect*, Gen. xvii. 1. *i. e.* behave thyself as one that art sensible thou art always in my Presence, and under my Eye; and in the Sense of this, see thou beest *upright* and *sincere*, and that thou dost not vainly attempt to impose upon me by any demure *Shews* or hypocritical *Pretences.* And the same is implied in that of the Apostle, *Col.* iii. 22. *Servants obey in all Things your Masters, according to the Flesh, not with Eye-service, as Men-pleasers, but in singleness of Heart, fearing God*, *i. e.* be not like those Servants that do their Duty for no other end but to ingratiate themselves with their Masters, and accordingly do it no longer than while their Master's Eye is upon them; but do you it with all *Sincerity*, out of an awful Respect to God, considering that when Man's Eye is *off*, his Eye is *upon* you. The Sense of all which is, that after the Example of Holy *David*, Psal. xvi. 8. we should endeavour *to set the Lord always before us*, and to possess our minds with a quick and lively Sense of his being continually *present* with us, wheresoever we are, and whatsoever we are about, and a constant *Witness* and *Spectator* of all our Actions.

And this we shall find will be of unspeakable Use to us in the whole *Course* and *Progress* of our Christian Warfare. For,

1. It will mightily restrain us from all sinful Actions: For as St *Austin* observes the greatest Part of Sin is taken away, if a Man hath but a *Witness* of his Conversation; and much more, if he be sensible that he hath such a Witness as God, with whom he is infinitely more concerned than with all the World besides; who is the *Judge* of all his Actions, the *Rewarder* of Virtue; and *Punisher* of Vice, the eternal Source of all those *Evils* or *Goods* that he can *fear* or *hope for.* And who but a Man that is desperately wicked, dares do an evil Action in the *Presence* and *Sight* of such a formidable Witness? For suppose you beheld this Almighty Being sitting upon a Cloud in some visible Form, with a Thunder-bolt in his Hand; and from thence looking down upon you, *curiously* observing how you demean yourselves, and *closely* pursuing you with his awful Eye thro' all your dark *Retreats* and *Privacies*;

cies; would not the Thought of any Action that is displeasing to him, be ready to strike you into *Trembling* and *Horror*? Could you imagine yourselves to be any where secure in your Wickedness, while you saw yourselves uncovered to his All-seeing Eyes, to which your Closets lie as open as your Halls, and your Hearts as the High-ways? Doubtless you could not. Why now, the lively *Belief* and *Apprehension* of a Thing, is equivalent to a *sensible* Perception. If I were *thorowly assured* that the King were listening behind the Curtain, and heard every Word that is spoken in the Room, I should, doubtless, be as much afraid of talking Treason against him, tho I saw him *not*, as if he stood just *before* me. And so tho God be with me in an *invisible* Manner, and I am not able to see him thro' that thick Curtain of Matter which is drawn between me and his Spiritual Essence, yet if I *firmly believe* that he is *behind* it, and am constantly aware that he is *listening* to what *I say*, and *prying* into what I *do*, that he keeps *Intelligence* with my *Thoughts*, and is intimately *acquainted* with all my *Designs* and *Intentions*, it will render me as cautious of my Thoughts, and Words, and Actions, as if I saw him standing by me in a *visible Shechinah* or *Glory*, to *record* every Passage of my Life, and *enter* into his Debt-Books every *Item* of my Guilt, against the great Day of Accounts: But how much the want of such a due Apprehension of God's *Presence* with us, lets Men loose to all Wickedness, may be collected from that of the Prophet, *Ezek.* ix. 9. *The Iniquity of the House of Judah is exceeding great, and the Land is full of Blood, and the City full of Perverseness:* and how comes this to pass? Why, *they say, The Lord hath forsaken the Earth, and the Lord seeth not*; whereas, on the contrary, *David* attributes his *keeping God's Precepts and Testimonies*, to the lively Sense he had, that his Ways were always *before* God, *i. e.* lay open to his *Sight* and *Inspection*, Psal. cxix. 161. But then,

2. Such a lively Sense of God's *Presence* with, and *Inspection* over us, will be of mighty Use to keep us *sincere* and *upright* in the whole Course of our Actions: For, alas! To what purpose should we *dissemble* and *conceal* our Wickedness from the Eye of the World, so long as we *lie open* to the Eye of God? Would you not think it very strange, to see a Company of Prisoners, that, within a few Hours, are to be tried for their Lives, solicitously concerning themselves how to appear lovely and innocent *to one another*, hiding their Deformities, and disguising their Crimes with *artificial* Pretexts and Apologies, that so they may *cheat* and *juggle* one another into a mutual good Opinion of themselves; but in the mean time take no notice of their *Judge*, who sits before them upon the Bench, observing all their *Tricks* and *Impostures*, and holds their Lives in his Hands, being commissionated to *discharge* or *condemn* them, according as he finds them *innocent* or *guilty*. And yet just thus do those Men act, whose Religion is nothing but a vain Ostentation and Ambition of popular Applause; they *skrew* their Looks, *study* their Actions, *force* their Inclinations, and all, to compose themselves into an outward *Semblance* of Religion; they imploy a World of Care and Art to *disguise* themselves, and with the Colours of Sanctity to *varnish* their unhallowed Natures, they openly *deny* themselves their dearest Pleasures, and in the View of the World, are many times forced to act against the Grain of their strongest Inclinations; and all this to *mask* their depraved Tempers, that they may *appear* what they *are not*, in the View of the World, and juggle themselves into a *Saint-like* Reputation; but whilst they are thus industriously *courting* the good Opinion of their Fellow-Prisoners, their All-seeing *Judge*, upon whose final Sentence their everlasting Fate depends, is *present* with them; and tho they take no more notice of him than if he were a *Cypher* in the World, is perfectly *conscious* to all their Artifice, and *sees thro'* all their hypocritical Disguises, and will ere long *unmask* and *expose* them to the View and Scorn of all the World. And this considered, what a ridiculous Folly is *Hypocrisy*, that *hides* us only from those that have *little* or *nothing* to do with us, but leaves us

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bare and *naked* to his Eye, with whom we are most *concerned*. Alas! what a poor Project is it to take so much Pains as we do, to recommend ourselves to Men, to Men that must stand at the *same* Tribunal, and undergo the *same* Judgment with ourselves? For what will their *good* Opinion avail us, if the Judge *disapprove* us, in whose Hands our Lives and Souls are? If he think *well* of us, we are safe tho all the World should condemn us, but if he condemn us, tho every Creature should *acquit*, they cannot *rescue* us from his Sentence. But alas! how *differently* soever God and Men may think of us *now*, yet when he comes to discover his Thoughts of us, in his publick Judgment and Sentence, all the World will be of *his* Mind; and if we *stand right* in his Opinion, we shall be *applauded* by the whole Universe, howsoever we may be vilified now; as on the contrary, if he *condemn* us, we shall be sure to be *hissed at* thro'out all the Congregation of Spirits, how *gloriously* soever we may be thought of at present. And by how much the better we are esteemed of *now*, by so much the more we shall be hissed at *then*, when the *Cheat* is discovered, and the hypocritical Vizor is pluckt from our Devils Faces.

This, if Men duly considered, and fixt it in their Minds, would effectually cure them of all their *Hypocrisy*: For, alas! what Hypocrisy can so *cunningly* disguise them, as to conceal 'em from Omniscience? If Men will be wicked therefore, they were e'en as good put on a *bold Face*, and be wicked *openly*; for 'tis to very little purpose for them to *sneak* into Corners, unless they could find one *dark* enough to *conceal* them from God, and *cover* them from his All-seeing Eye: For why should that Man be *ashamed* or *afraid* to let a Boy or Neighbour be *conscious* to his Wickedness, that never scruples to commit it in the open *View* of the dreadful Majesty of Heaven, by whose final Sentence his Everlasting Fate must be decided?

And so, on the other hand, to what purpose should we study to be more *devout* and *temperate*, *sober* and *charitable* in the View of the World, than we are in our Retirements, when we have no other Eye but God's upon us? That which we are mainly concerned in, is to approve ourselves to *him*, and if we can do this, what great matter is it, tho our *Closet* be all our *Stage*, and *Heaven* our only *Spectator*? God *hears* the softest Whispers of our Souls, and *sees* thro' all our honest Intentions, and our most *secret* Virtues are as *legible* to his Eye, as if they were written on our Foreheads with a Sun-beam. We need no Trumpet to proclaim our Alms in his *Ears*, for he knows by whom such a poor Man was *relieved*, such a starving Family *succoured*, tho we should not superscribe our *Names* upon our Charity, nor *let our left hand know what our right Hand hath done.* And if, by the *sincere* Discharge of our Duty, we have *approved* ourselves to God, what need we concern ourselves any farther? since 'tis not from *Men*, but from *God*, that we expect the *Recompense* of our Obedience: No, doubtless, did we but live under the constant Sense of God's *Presence* with, and *Inspection* over us, we should regard him *much more* in every good Action, and the good Opinion of the World *much less* than we do; and the more *secret* our good Deeds were the more we should *rejoice* in them, because they would give us a *stronger* Testimony of our *Simplicity* and *Sincerity*: For what should move us to be good, when God only sees us, but pure Respect to his Authority, and an *honest* Intention of obeying him? And if *Obedience* be our Design, the more *private* our good Deeds are, the more *Pleasure* they will afford us, because those good Deeds have *most* of Obedience in them, that have least of the Theatre.

VI. To prosper our *Course* and *Progress* in the Christian Warfare, it is also necessary, that we should frequently *examine* and *review* our own Actions, for this our Religion injoins as a necessary Part of the *militant* Life of a Christian: So 2 *Cor.* xiii. 5. *Examine yourselves whether you be in the Faith, prove your own selves*; and particularly, it is injoined as a proper Preparation to the

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Sacrament, *Let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat,* 1 Cor. xi. 28. So also *Gal.* vi. 4. *Let a Man prove, or examine, his own Work*; where the Greek Word δοκιμάζειν, which in all these Texts we render to *prove* or *examine*, hath Two Significations. First, To call ourselves to *Account*, to *try* our *past* Actions by the Rule, whether they be good or evil; Secondly, To take such a due *Care* of our Actions, as that upon a strict Trial of them, we may be able to approve them to God and our own Consciences. In the *First* of which Senses the New Testament doth most commonly understand it; namely, to call ourselves to *Account*, and make a strict *Survey* of our Actions, and pass an impartial *Judgment* upon them, whether they are good or evil, and accordingly, 1 *Cor.* xi. 31. instead of δοκιμαζέτω, in *Verse* 28. i. e. *Let a Man examine himself*, the Apostle uses, as a Synonymous Phrase, διεκρίνομεν, *i. e.* if we *judge ourselves*, if we *summon* our past Actions before the *Tribunal* of our Consciences, and *try* and *examine* them by the Rule, whether they are good or evil, and according as we find them, to *approve* or *condemn* ourselves for them.

And this is a Duty of great Necessity to the successful Prosecution of our Christian Warfare: For unless we do frequently *reflect* upon ourselves, and take a *strict* Account of our past Actions and Behaviour, we shall incur a thousand Errors and Immoralities in the Hurry of our secular Occasions, without taking any *notice* of them; and those Sins which we *heedlesly* commit, and never *think of* afterwards, tho at first, perhaps, they may have little or no *Malice* in them, do yet leave a *malicious* Infusion behind them, and *infect* the Will with bad Inclinations, and insensibly *dispose* it to *wilful* and *deliberate* Sins: For the Pleasure of *one* bad Action will be still inviting us to *another*, and that to a *third*, and so we shall be inconsiderately *tolled* on from Sin to Sin in the Course of a *heedless* and *unreflecting* Life, till, before ever we are aware, our Inclination to the Sin which we have so heedlesly *repeated*, becomes too strong for our pious *Resolution*: For when we have *carelesly* permitted *one* Sin to break thro' our Fence, that will open a Gap for *another* to follow; and if this be not presently *stopt* by Repentance, 'twill make the Breach yet *wider* for *others*, and those again for *others*, till at last they have quite *trodden down* our good Resolution, and made a *Thorow-fare* in our Wills for a Custom of sinning: But if we frequently *reflect* upon, and *examine* ourselves, 'tis impossible our Faults should long escape our *Discovery*, and we shall be sure to *see* them time enough to *correct* and *amend* them, before they are too *deeply* rooted in our Natures, and have wound themselves too far into our Inclinations; and a Wound in our *Innocence*, as well as our Bodies, may be easily cured if it be taken *in time*, but if it be *neglected* too long, it will *rankle*, by degrees, into an incurable Gangrene.

And as frequent *Self-Examination* is a great *Bridle* to our *Sin*, so it is also an effectual *Spur* to our *Virtue*: For as when a Man reflects upon his Sins and Miscarriages, and considers *how* and *where* he hath done amiss, his Conscience will be presently *urging* and *exciting* him to Repentance and Amendment; so when he reflects upon his own Virtue and Sincerity, his Conscience will *smile upon* and *crown* him with Applauses, and give him such a *sweet* and *grateful* Relish of his own Actions, as will mightily *encourage* him to *persevere* in Well-doing: For in all our *Self-Examinations*, we taste this Difference between *Good* and *Evil*, the *Sweetness* of that, and the *Bitterness* of this, and consequently, the oftner we do so, the more we shall be sure to *like* and *approve* of the one, and to *dislike* and *nauseate* the other.

Wherefore to secure a good Success to this our Christian Warfare, as it is necessary, especially *at first*, that we should every *Morning*, before we go into the World, repeat and enforce our good *Resolution*; so it is no less requisite, especially till we have made some *considerable* Progress, that we should every *Night*, when we are withdrawn from the World, strictly *examine* the Performances of the Day, whether they are such as do comport with our so-

lemn Engagements. And if upon an impartial Survey, it appear that they do, tho as yet it be but *weakly* and *imperfectly*, let us *attend* to the Sense of our own Minds, to that silent Melody that resounds from our Consciences to our Actions, and so lie down in Peace, *blessing* and *adoring* that Grace, by which we have been *assisted* and *preserved*. Or if it appear that we have been *unwarily* faulty, for want of due Care and Watchfulness, let us resolve to take more *Care* for the future, and thereby to put a timely *Stop* to our Sin, before it hath too far *insinuated* into our Will and Inclinations; but if we are conscious of any *wilful* Breach upon our Morning Vows of Obedience, let us *lament* and *bewail* it with Shame and Indignation. What have I done, O wretched *Traitor* that I am, to God and my own Soul! I have *falsified* my Vows to Heaven, and *broke* those Sacred Bands, by which I was *tied up* from my Lusts and my Ruin. What can I *plead* for myself, *base* and *unworthy* that I am? With what Face can I go into his dreadful Presence, whom I have so often *mocked* with my *treacherous* Promises of Amendment? Yet, go I will, tho I am all *ashamed* and *confounded*, and *confess* and *bewail* mine Iniquity before him.

If we would but take care thus to call ourselves to *Account* every Night, and impartially to *censure* the Actions of the Day, it is not to be imagined how fast 'twould set us *forward* in our Christian Warfare; how much the *Reflection* on a *well-spent* Day would *cheer* and *enliven* us; how the *grateful* Sense of it would *spirit* our Faculties, and *encourage* us to go on against all Oppositions; how much the *Review* of the Day would contribute to make our Reason more *vigilant*, and our Consciences more *tender* for the future; how much the Pleasure of our Sins would be *allayed* and *abated*, by the *stinging* Reflections we should make upon them, and how much the Dread of having the same Reflections *repeated* to us at Night, would secure us against the Temptations of the Day.

VII. To prosper the *Course* of our Christian Warfare, it is also necessary that we should be very *watchful* and *circumspect*: For this also is one of those *militant* Duties which the Gospel injoins us. Thus *Mat.* xxvi. 41. *Watch and pray that ye enter not into Temptation*, and *Mark* xiii. 37. *What I say unto you, I say unto all, watch*; so also, 1 *Cor.* xvi. 13. *Watch ye, stand fast in the Faith, quit yourselves like Men*; and 1 *Thess.* v. 6. *Wherefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober*, where the Nature of the Duty is plainly discovered by its Opposite or Contrary, *Let us not sleep, but watch*, *i. e.* do not behave yourselves like Men that are *asleep*, that take no Notice or Regard of what is done *by*, *to*, or *about them*; but be sure you exercise a *faithful*, *prudent*, and *constant* Care over your own Actions, and those manifold Temptations that assault and surround you. And therefore elsewhere 'tis exprest by *walking circumspectly*, Eph. v. 15. *i. e.* looking round about you, *weighing* the Nature and Circumstances of your Actions, and using all honest Care, either to *prevent* the Temptations that threaten you, or to *provide* against them; so that in short, the Sense of this Duty is this, that we carefully avoid acting *rashly* and *precipitantly*, without *considering* before-hand the Nature of our Action, whether it be good or evil; that in all *doubtful* and *suspicious* Cases, we impartially *consult* our Rule and Conscience, and *look* before we *leap*, and take care to *satisfy* ourselves of the Goodness of our *Designs*, before we put them into *Execution*; in a Word, that we do not *carelesly* run ourselves into Temptations, but, if possible, to *avoid* them; if not, to be sure to *arm* ourselves against them, and keep as *far off* from all Sin, especially from that we are most *inclined* to, as is consistent with our necessary Occasions; or, in fewer Words, 'tis to be always *well-advised* in what we do, whether it be good or evil; and if it be *evil*, to remove, so far as we can, from all *Occasions* that lead to it, and provide our selves with Considerations *against* it, and to keep them always *awake* in our Minds, that we may not be *surprized* by it unawares;

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Which is a Duty indispensably necessary for us in the whole Course of our Christian Warfare: For whilst we accustom ourselves to act *rashly* and *inconsiderately*, without bethinking before-hand what we say or do, we wander like blind Men in a Field, that is full of *Pits* and *Quagmires*, and are every moment in danger of stumbling into one Mischief or other, and shall certainly plunge ourselves in many an evil Custom, before ever we have bethought ourselves of the Evil of it; and so instead of conquering our *old* Sins, we shall be ever and anon running ourselves into *new* ones; and while we are running away from *one* evil, shall many times stumble into *another*, and to avoid the *Defects* of Virtue, leap headlong into the *Excesses* of it: For in most moral Actions, the Transition from the *utmost* of what is *lawful*, into the *nearmost* of what is *sinful* is indiscernable; and that Line which parts *this* Virtue from that neighbouring Vice, is generally so *small*, that 'tis hard to distinguish where they are *separated*, and to fix the just *Boundary*, whitherto we may go, and no farther: But then considering that almost every Virtue lies in the *middle* between Two sinful *Extremes*, neither of which are separated from it by any *plain* or *visible* Land-mark; how is it possible for us, without great *Care* of our Steps, to keep on stedfastly in the *right* Path, when there are so many *wrong* ones bordering upon it? For when we perceive we have wandered too far towards *either* Extreme, and are endeavouring to *retrieve* ourselves, if we do not take great Care of our Steps, we shall be apt to wander as far the *other* way, and so stumble out of one extreme into another: For he who lives *heedlesly* and *incuriously*, regards not how *near* he approaches to any Sin, provided he doth but keep himself out of it; and when once a Man takes the Liberty to go as near to any Sin, as he thinks he lawfully *may*, it is a thousand to one but he will be transported by his Inclination a great deal farther than he *should*. So true is that of *Clem. Alex. Pædag.* lib. 2. c. 1. Ταχὺ γὰρ καταπίπτουσιν ἐπὶ τὸ δρᾷν τὸ μὴ ἐξὸν, οἱ πάντα δρῶντες ἃ ἐξὸν, *i. e.* They who will do all things that are *lawful*, will quickly be induced to do what is *unlawful*; especially if they be strongly inclined to it; because the very *Nearness* of what a Man loves, doth always render it more *tempting* and *alluring* to him. Thus he that hath a strong Inclination to *Lying*, can never be safe, so long as he allows himself to be excessive *talkative*; he that is vehemently propense to *fleshly Lust*, must needs indanger his Innocence if he come too near the farthermost Limits of a *modest* Freedom; and he whose Nature is prone to *Malice* and *Revenge*, cannot but run a mighty Hazard, if he indulge to himself the utmost Degree of a *just* and lawful Resentment: For bad *Inclinations* are never so impatient of Restraint, as when they are within *Prospect* of their proper *Satisfactions*, and the Objects which attract them are *near* and *easy* to be enjoyed. Upon which Account it must needs be a very dangerous Thing for such as are engaged in the Christian Warfare, to live within *Sight* of the Temptations they are most inclined to; because the *nearer* they are to them, the more they will *court* and *importune* them; and while a Man comes near a beloved *Lust*, and doth not enjoy it, he doth but *tantalize* himself, and *enrage* his Appetite after those vicious Satisfactions, whose *alluring* Relishes he had almost *forgotten*. If therefore he would obtain a perfect Victory over his Lust, he must not only forbear to *act*, but also to *approach* it; at least, till he hath so far weaned his Inclination from it, as that its *Nearness* ceases to be a *Temptation* to him: For Inclination, like all other Motion, is always *swiftest* when it is *nearest* its Centre, and when once 'tis within the *Reach* and *Attraction* of it, it hurries towards it with *Fury* and *Impatience*; and if in this its violent Rage, it happen to break out to its beloved Sin, and to taste the forbidden Pleasure of it, 'twill thereby immediately *recover* all its impaired Strength, and become as *headstrong* and *outragious* as ever; and so all that Ground which we get in a *Month*'s Abstinence from our Sin, we shall lose in a *Moment*'s Enjoyment of it. Upon this Account therefore it highly concerns us, if we would succeed in our Christian Warfare,

fare, to be very *watchful* and *circumspect*, to look well to our Steps, and not approach too near to *any* Sin, but especially to any that we are strongly *inclined* to.

VIII. To give us good Success in this our Christian Warfare, it is also necessary that we be *diligent* and *industrious* in our particular *Callings*. This is one of those Instrumental Duties which our Religion prescribes thro'out the whole *Course* and *Progress* of our Christian Warfare. Thus 1 *Thess.* iv. 10, 11. *We beseech you, Brethren, that you increase more and more, and that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own Business, and work with your own Hands, as we commanded ye*; and this, 2 *Thess.* iii. 10. he backs with another, that *if any would not work, they should not eat, i. e.* That they should not be maintained in their Sloth and Idleness, and, like *Drones*, be permitted to dwell at Ease in the *Hive*, and devour the Labours of the more industrious *Bees*; and this, *ver.* 11. he calls *walking disorderly*; and *ver.* 8 and 9, he tells us, that 'twas for this Cause that he rather chose to *work with his own Hands* for his Livelihood, than to be maintained by them, as he might justly have demanded; that he might make himself an *Example* of Diligence for them to *follow*. So also, Eph. iv. 28. *Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his Hands the Thing which is good, i. e.* employing himself in some honest Calling, *that he may have to give to him that needs*; the Sense of all which is to oblige us to engage ourselves in some honest *Calling* or *Employment*, and to be *diligent* and *industrious* in it.

And how necessary this is to secure us in the whole *Course* and *Progress* of our Religion, appears from hence, that we are naturally a sort of very *active* Beings, that must be employed one way or other; that we have a Mind within us, that will be always in *Motion*; that being a *Spiritual* Subsistence, and as such, of a quite different Nature from *dull* and *sluggish* Matter, will never admit of *Rest* and *Inactivity*; that derives all its Pleasures from *Action*, and hath nothing to live upon but the grateful Relish of its own *Motions*. And this being the State of that *active* Principle within us, that *constitutes* us Men, we had need take great Care to keep it *honestly* busied and employed: For it being naturally such an exceeding *busy Thing*, 'twill be sure to find something or other to work upon; and if it be not constantly employed about *honest* and *lawful* Things, 'twill quickly divert the current of its Motion another way, and exert its Activity upon *dishonest* and *unlawful* ones. And hence it is, that, since the Apostasy of human Nature, God hath placed the Generality of Men in such Circumstances, wherein some honest *Calling*, and their *Diligence* and *Industry* therein, is indispensably *necessary* to their comfortable Subsistence: For he wisely considered, that such was the *Indisposition* of our *degenerate* Natures, to the *Divine* and *Spiritual* Exercises of Religion, that 'twould be impossible for *us*, in this *imperfect* State, to keep our Minds *always* intent upon them, to fix our Thoughts *continually* upon him, and exert our Powers without any *Pause* or *Interruption*, in perpetual Acts of *Love*, *Adoration* and *Imitation* of him; that there is such a *Repugnance* in our Tempers to these blessed Operations, that, if we had nothing else to do, they would soon grow *irksome* and *intolerable* to us; and therefore, lest being quite *tired* out with these Spiritual Acts of Religion, we should *hate* them, and so turn the Current of our Activity into the contrary Channel; he hath placed us in such Circumstances, wherein we have frequent Opportunities to *rest* our wearied Minds from these *abstracted* Exercises in such *innocent* Employments, as are necessary to our comfortable Subsistence in this World: So that by putting us under the Necessity of employing ourselves in secular Trades and Callings, he hath taken care to *intercept* our Minds, that they may not fly off from the *pure* Acts of Religion into the contrary Impieties; and that when they are not *divinely*, they may be *innocently* employed; and by diverting our Activity with *honest*, when it is weary of *Spiritual* Exercise, he hath taken a wise Course to *confine* and *bound* it, and leave it less Scope and

Liberty to *rove* and make Incursions into *sinful* and *prohibited* Actions. And therefore, as *Aristotle* commends *Archytus* for his Invention of Rattles, because Children, by playing with them, are kept from breaking Vessels of *use*; so ought we to admire the Wisdom and Goodness of God, for thus necessitating us to exert our Activity in *secular* Arts and Trades, because by thus *innocently* imploying our *corrupt* and *busy* Natures, he hath taken an admirable Course to divert us from mischievous Actions.

And he having thus obliged us, by our Necessities, to follow some *honest* Calling for a comfortable Livelihood, he expects that we should be *diligent* and *industrious* in that *particular* Calling wherein his Providence hath placed us: For otherwise he loses his End; which was to restrain us from being *sinfully* active, by necessitating us to be *innocently* so. And now that by putting us into those Necessities, by which we are put upon furnishing one another with those several Conveniences of Life, for the Supply of which our respective Trades and Callings are intended, we, by being *diligent* therein, approve ourselves *faithful* Servants in the great Family of God, and by *industriously* discharging those *particular* Offices wherein he hath placed us, we act as *dutiful* Ministers of his Providence towards one another: Because by so doing, we supply those Wants and Necessities which God hath *made*, and which he hath made to be supplied by *our* Office and Ministries; so that now to mind our own *Business*, is a Part of our *Religion*, and 'tis that particular Part to which God's Providence hath called us. If therefore we are *idle* and *neglective* in this, we are undutiful Servants to the common Master of the World, how officious soever we may be in *other* Matters: For this is the proper Work of our Office, and therefore if we are unfaithful in *this*, we can be faithful in *nothing*. Should the Bailiff of a Family *neglect* letting his Master's Lands, and gathering in his Rents, he would be thought a *bad* Servant, how *diligent* soever he might be in the Kitchin or the Stables; and so if we are *remiss* in our *particular* Offices and Employments, we are *bad* Servants to God, how *sedulous* soever we may be, either in the Offices of *other* Men, or in the *common* Services which we all owe him; and he that neglects his own Calling to serve God in his Closet, or in the Church, is like an unfaithful Steward, that neglects providing for the Family, to dress the Garden, and water the Flowers.

'Tis true, as we ought not to devote to the *common* Service of God, that Time and Attendance, which, by the Rules of Prudence and good Husbandry, are appropriated to our *particular* Callings; so neither ought we to permit our particular Calling so to *ingross* our Time and Attendance, as to leave none for our Prayers and those common Services, whether *private* or *publick*, which, as Creatures and Christians, we are obliged to render to our Creator: For as he, that to *serve* God *neglects* his Calling, is a *religious* Truant; so he that to *attend* his Calling *neglects* to serve God, is a *profane* Drudge: But for a truly *pious* and *industrious* Man, it is not at all difficult so to keep his Business and his Religion *apart*, as that they may not *interfere* with one another; and faithfully to *discharge* whatsoever his *Calling* exacts of him, and yet leave void Spaces enough in his Time to do all that his *Religion* requires.

Neither are we obliged to be so *industrious* in our Calling as to deny our selves any *moderate* Refreshments or Recreations, which are not only *useful*, but sometimes *necessary* to *breathe* our Spirits after they have been almost stifled in a Croud of Business, and *divert* our wearied Thoughts, which like the strings of a Lute, by being *slackened* now and then, will sound the sweeter when they are *wound up* again. But then we ought to take care that we do not turn our *Physick* into *Food*, and make that our *Business* which should be only our *Diversion*; that our Recreations be *short*, and apt to *refresh*, but not to *steal away* our Minds from severer Employments: For *long* Sports and Recreations are like a *large* Entry to a *little* House, they take up so much Room in the *narrow* Compass of our Time, that there is not Space enough left in it

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for the more *useful* Apartments; and so far as our Sports do exceed the Measures of *necessary* and *convenient* Recreation, they are *unwarrantable* Encroachments upon our Calling and Religion, 'Tis true, as for the Measures of *Convenience*, they are not alike to *all*; for, as for those whose large Fortunes have placed them beyond the Necessities of the World, they may *conveniently* allow themselves *larger* Portions of Recreation than those of meaner Circumstances, who having not yet made a competent provision for their Families, are obliged in Justice to a more *constant* Industry, lest they fall under St. *Paul*'s Censure of being *worse than Infidels*. But how plentiful soever our outward Condition may be, it will by no means warrant us either to live *idly*, or to make our *Recreations* our continual Employments; but the more Leisure we have from secular *Business*, the greater Portions of our Time we ought to consecrate to Religion, and since our *Bodies* and our *Families* are so liberally provided for, to be so much the more industrious in supplying the Necessities of our *Souls*, that so *these* may not be the only *miserable* Things about us. But then our Natures being so *depraved*, as that they cannot dwell long on the severe Exercises of Religion, and yet so *active*, as that, if in the Intervals of our Religion they be not *innocently* imployed, they will be apt to run into *Mischief*, 'tis in our own Defence necessary, how prosperous soever our outward Condition may be, that we should find out some *honest* Business or other to keep our Activity *regularly* exercised. And this will be no hard matter for us to do, considering how many *generous*, *liberal*, and *ingenious* Employments there are fit for Persons of the highest Rank and Condition. They may dedicate such Portions of their Time to the useful Studies of *Philosophy* or *History*, or of the *Laws* and *Customs* of their own Country; and such, to the *Inspection* of their own Estates, or to *overlook* and *govern* their Families; and such, to *examine* the Complaints of their Tenants, or the Necessities of their Neighbours, or to *reconcile* Differences, or *conciliate* Love and good Neighbourhood among those that are near or under them; in these, and such like Employments, they may *innocently* exercise their active Minds, and thereby not only divert themselves from *sinful* Courses, but also render themselves very *useful* to the World.

But whatsoever our Condition in the World may be, it must doubtless be of very dangerous Consequence to our Religion, not to be *innocently* and *usefully* employed. For as the wise *Cato* hath observed, *Nihil agendo male agere disces*, *i. e.* by accustoming yourself to do *nothing*, you will most certainly learn to do *ill*. For your *busy* Mind, like Nature, will admit of no *vacuum*, but must be *always full* of one thing or other; and it can no sooner dismiss its *pious* or *honest* Thoughts, but *vicious* and *unlawful* ones will be swarming about it. For *religious*, *lawful*, and *sinful* Objects, are the only Companions our Minds have to converse with, and therefore since they must and will be conversing with *one* thing or *other*, we ought to take great care, that as soon as ever they have done entertaining *religious* Objects, they be presently supplied and presented with *lawful* ones, with some *honest* Business or *innocent* Diversion; that so we may not be at leisure to attend to those *sinful* Objects; which, in the others Absence, will be perpetually *crouding* and *thrusting* themselves upon us. For when we are neither *honestly* nor *religiously* imployed, we shall be perfectly at leisure to attend to any Invitation to Sin; and since we must still be doing one thing or other, our having nothing *else* to do, will be a strong inducement to do that which is *evil*, and to spend our restless Activity in some *irregular* Course or other, accordingly as we are *tempted* and *inclined*. If we are of a *busy* and *pragmatical* Temper, our Leisure will presently invite us to be *intermeddling* with other Folks Business, to be *tampering* with State Affairs, and casting new Models of Government, and *censuring* the Wisdom of those publick Administrations of which we do not understand the Reasons; if we are of a *froward*, *peevish*, and *untractable* Temper, we shall be apt, when we have nothing else to do, to be venting

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our Activity in *factious* and *turbulent* Zeal, in *seditious* Pratings and Conspiracies, in *backbiting* our Adversaries, and *fetching* and *carrying* scandalous Reports to create Jealousies and Animosities between Neighbour and Neighbour. In a word, if we are of a *sanguine* and *jovial* Disposition, our idle Hours will be so many tempting Opportunities to *Intemperance* and *Wantonness*, *Profaneness* and *Scurrility*, and all the other Wickednesses of a *lewd* and *dissolute* Conversation. If therefore we mean to be secured from *sinful* Actions, we must allow ourselves no leisure from *religious* or *honest* ones, which for the above-named Reason, we shall find utterly unpracticable, if we be not *diligent* and *industrious* in some honest Calling.

But whilst Mens Minds are *honestly* imployed, they will not be at leisure to listen to Temptation; and 'twill be difficult for any of those Inducements to Sin, which the Devil and outward Objects do perpetually suggest to us, to obtain Admittance to *speak* with our Thoughts, whilst they are thus taken up with *wiser* and *better* Company. But as soon as we dismiss *these*, we do in effect beckon Temptations to ourselves, and *invite* the Devil and the World to *invite* us to be wicked. For, as we say, *Opportunity makes the Thief*, *i. e.* it tempts him to steal; so when we give the Devil the Opportunity of an *idle* Hour, we do thereby tempt *him* to tempt *us*, and importunately invite him to *steal* away the Treasure of our Innocence, by putting the *Key* of it into his hand, and giving him a free *Access* to it. And tho we should be firmly resolved not to sin, yet 'tis impossible we should be *safe* so long as we are at leisure to be *tempted*; because while we are *at leisure* we shall be very often *disputing* and *holding* Arguments with the Tempter, who by his *Quirks* and *Sophistries*, will many Times circumvent such *Novices* as we, before we are aware. But when we are not only *resolved* against him, but are also so *imployed* as that we are not at leisure to attend to him, it is past his Skill to fasten any Temptation upon us. Wherefore if we would be secure in the Course of our Christian Warfare, we must follow St. *Jerom*'s Counsel to his Friend *Rusticus*, *Semper boni aliquid operis facito, ut Diabolus te semper inveniat occupatum*; be always doing one good Work or other, that so the Devil may always find thee busy.

IX. To our *Course* and *Progress* in the Christian Warfare, it is also necessary that we should endeavour, so far as in us lies, to keep up a constant *Chearfulness* of *Spirit* in our Religion. It is doubtless a great Disgrace to our Religion to imagine (as too many *superstitious* Christians do) that it is an Enemy to *Mirth* and *Chearfulness*, and a severe Exactor of *pensive* Looks and *solemn* Faces; that Men are never serious enough till they are *moped* into Statues, and *cloistered* from all Society, but that of their own melancholy Thoughts: That 'tis a Gospel-Duty to *whine* or to be *silent*, and retire themselves from the most innocent *Pleasures* and *Festivities* of Conversation; and, in a word, that all kind of *Mirth* and *facetious* Humour is to be rank'd among those *Idle words* which our Saviour tells us, shall be brought to Judgment. As if Religion were a *Caput mortuum*, a heavy, stark, insipid thing, that had neither *Heat*, nor *Life*, nor *Motion* in it; or were intended for a *Medusa*'s Head to transform Men into Monuments of Stone. By which *false* Conceptions of it, they render it much more burdensom than it is in its own Nature. For to make Religion forbid us any thing that is *human* and *natural*, is to render it a real *Grievance* unto human Nature; 'tis to make our *Duty* run a-tilt at the Principles of our *Being*, and set our *Conscience* and our *Nature* at Variance with one another. And therefore, since to be *risible* and *sociable*, is as natural to us as to be *reasonable*, to make our *Religion* an Enemy to our *Mirth* and *Conversation*, is to represent it as a tyrannical Invader of the essential *Liberties* and *Properties* of human Nature. 'Tis true, indeed, tho it denies us not the freedom of an *innocent* Humour, nor disallows those little *Plaisances* and inoffensive *Railleries* of Fancy which are sometimes requisite to *sauce* our Conversation, and give it a *quicker* Relish; yet hath it taken care

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to bound our Merriments with the necessary Precepts of *Sobriety* and *Gravity*; that so by too much whiffling up and down in the little *Levities* of Fancy, our Minds may not grow *vain*, and *light*, and *trifling*, and be thereby indisposed to *serious* Thoughts and Reflections: But so long as we keep within the Bounds of *Sobriety*, and do not sally out into *malicious* or *scurrilous* or *profane* Jesting, our Religion doth not only *connive* at our Mirth, but *commend* and *approve* it: and so remote is it from *cramping* those Strings and Sinews of the Mind, *Chearfulness* and *Action*, that it *recollects* their scatter'd Vigor, and *winds up* their Slackness to a true Harmony.

For it requires that our *speech should be alway with grace*, Col. iv. 6. *i. e.* as some Expositors understand the Phrase, that it should not be *whining* and *melancholy*, but *sprightly* and *chearful*; it bids us *rejoice evermore*, 1 Thes. v. 16. and *rejoice in the Lord alway, and again rejoice*, Phil. iv. 4. that is, To endeavour to be chearful in all Conditions, and to bear all Events with a *serene* and *lightsome* Mind. And therefore the Apostle reckons this among the blessed Fruits and Effects of that Divine Spirit which accompanies and animates Christianity, *viz. Joy*, or *Chearfulness*, Gal. v. 22. and this is one of the Particulars in which the same Apostle makes the *Christian* Laws to consist, as they stand opposed to the *Ritual* Laws of the *Jews*; *the Kingdom of Heaven, i. e.* The Laws of the Christian Church, *is not meat and drink, i. e.* Consists not of Injunctions or Prohibitions of Things that are of a *Ritual* or *Indifferent* Nature; *but Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost*, Rom. xiv. 17. which Three Particulars being opposed to Things that are *unnecessary* must, by the Law of Oppositions, denote Things that are *necessary*; and therefore as by *Righteousness* and *Peace*, must be meant *Justice* and *Peaceableness*, so by *Joy in the Holy Ghost*, must be meant *Chearfulness* and *Alacrity* in doing the Will of God; because *Joy* can be in no other Sense Matter of *Necessary* Duty. By all which it is evident, That *Chearfulness* of Temper is so far from being *discountenanced* by our Religion, that 'tis *required* and *injoyned* by it, so far as 'tis in our Power and Choice. And indeed it highly becomes us, who serve so good a Master, to be *free* and *chearful*, and thereby to express a grateful Sense of his Goodness, and of those glorious Rewards, which we expect from his inexhaustible Bounty; but as for a *gloomy* Look and *dejected* Countenance, it better beseems a Gally-Slave than a Servant of God. And as *Chearfulness* is a Duty that very well *becomes* our State, so it is highly *necessary* to support and carry us on in our Christian Warfare.

For *Chearfulness* is Nature's best Friend; it *removes* its Oppressions, *enlivens* its Faculties, and keeps its Spirits in a *brisk*, and *regular* Motion, and hereby renders it *easy* to itself, and *useful* and *serviceable* to God and Man. It dispels *Clouds* from the Mind, and *Fears* from the *Heart*, and kindles and cherishes in us *brave* and *generous* Affections, and composes our Natures into such a *regular* Temper, as is of all others the most fit to receive religious Impressions, and the Breathings of the Spirit of God. For what the *Jews* do observe of the Spirit of *Prophecy*, is as true of the Spirit of *Holiness*; that it dwells not with *Sadness*, but with *Chearfulness*; that being itself of a *calm* and *gentle* Nature, it loves not to reside with *black* and *melancholy* Passions, but requires a *composed* and *serene* Temper to act upon. And hence *Tertul.* in his *de Spectac. Deus præcepit Spiritum Sanctum, utpote pro Naturæ suæ bono tenerum & delicatum, Tranquillitate & Lenitate & Quiete & Pace tractare; non Furore, non Bile, non Ira, non Dolore inquietare: i. e.* God hath commanded that the Holy Spirit, who is of a tender and delicate *Nature*, should be entertained by us with Tranquillity and Mildness, with Quietness and Peace, and that we should take care not to disturb him with Fury and Choler, or with Anger and Grief. And indeed Melancholy naturally infests the Holy Spirit, and disturbs him in all his Operations; it overwhelms the Fancy with *black* Reeks and Vapours, and thereby *clouds* and *darkens* the Understanding, and *intercepts* the Holy Spirit's Illuminations; and, like red coloured Glass before the eye,

eye, cauſes the moſt *lovely* and *attractive* Objects to look *bloody* and *terrible.* It diſtracts the Thoughts, and renders them *wild, roving* and *incoherent*; and thereby utterly *indiſpoſes* them to Prayer and Conſideration, and renders them *deaf* and *unattentive* to all good Motions and Inſpirations. It *freezes* up the Heart with *deſpairing* Fears and Deſpondencies, and repreſents *eaſy* Things as *difficult* to us, and *difficult* as *impoſſible*, and thereby *diſcourages* us from all thoſe virtuous Attempts, to which the bleſſed Spirit doth ſo importunately *excite* and *provoke* us. In a word, it naturally *benumbs* and *ſtupifies* the Soul, *obſtructs* its Motions, and makes it *liſtleſs* and *unactive*, and ſo, by indiſpoſing it to *cooperate* with the Holy Spirit, renders it an *incapable* Subject of his Divine Grace and Influence. Thus Melancholy, you ſee, by its *ſullen* and *malevolent* Aſpects, doth obſtinately *reſiſt* and *counter-influence* the Holy Spirit, without whoſe Aid and aſſiſtence we can never hope to proſper in our Spiritual Warfare.

Wherefore, if we mean to ſucceed in this great Affair, it concerns us to uſe all honeſt and innocent Means to diſpel this *black* and *miſchievous* Humour, and to beget and maintain in our Minds a conſtant *Serenity* and *Chearfulneſs* of Temper; and whenever our Spirits begin to *droop* and *languiſh*, to betake ourſelves to ſuch *natural* Remedies, ſuch *harmleſs* Diverſions, Refreſhments and Recreations, as are fit and proper to *raiſe* them up again; and not to ſuffer them to *ſink* into a Bog of melancholy Humours, whilſt 'tis in our Power by any honeſt Art or Invention to *ſupport* them. Which, if we can but effect, will be of vaſt advantage to us in the whole Courſe of our Religion. For in an even *Chearfulneſs* of Temper, our Spirits will be always *lively, ſtrong*, and *active*, and fit for the *beſt* and *nobleſt* Operations; they will give *Light* to our Underſtandings, *Courage* to our Hearts, and *Wings* to our Affections; ſo that we ſhall be able more *clearly* to diſcern Divine and Heavenly Things, more *reſolutely* to practiſe, and more *vehemently* to aſpire after them; and our Conſiderations will be more *fixt*, our Devotions more *intent*, and all our ſpiritual Endeavours more *active* and *vivacious*. For a *chearful* Temper will repreſent every thing *chearfully* to us; 'twill repreſent God ſo *lovely*, Religion ſo *attractive*, the Rewards of it ſo *immenſe*, and the Difficulties of it ſo *inconſiderable*, and thereby inſpire us with ſo much *Life* and *Courage*, as that none of all thoſe ſpiritual Enemies, we war and contend againſt, will be able to withſtand our Reſolution.

X. To our Courſe and Progreſs in this our Spiritual Warfare, it is alſo neceſſary that we maintain in our Minds a conſtant *Senſe* and *Expectation* of Heaven; that ſince Things of the other World are *future* and *inviſible*, and conſequently leſs apt to *touch* and *effect* us than theſe worldly things which are continually *preſſing* upon our Senſes, we ſhould, as oft as we have Opportunity, withdraw our Thoughts from theſe *ſenſible* Objects, and retire into the *immaterial* World, and there entertain ourſelves with the cloſe *View* and *Contemplation* of the Joys and Glories it abounds with. For we are a ſort of Beings, that being compounded of *Fleſh* and *Spirit*, are by theſe *oppoſite* Principles of our Nature ally'd to Two *oppoſite* Worlds, and placed in the middle between *Heaven* and *Earth*, as the common Centre wherein thoſe diſtant Regions meet. By our *ſpiritual* Nature we hold Communion with the *ſpiritual* World, and by our *corporeal* with this *earthly* and *ſenſible* one; whoſe Objects being always *preſent* with us, and *ſtriking* as they do immediately upon our Senſes, we lie much more bare and open to them, than to thoſe of the Spiritual World. So that, unleſs we now and then *withdraw* ourſelves from theſe ſenſible Things, which hang like the Cloud between, we can never have a free *Proſpect* into that clear Heaven above them. And hence it becomes neceſſary that we ſhould now and then make a ſolemn *Retirement* of our Thoughts from *earthly* Objects and Enjoyments, that ſo we may approach near enough to Heaven, to *touch* and *feel* the Joys and Pleaſures of it, which, while we *tranſiently* behold in this Crowd of Worldly Objects, is placed at

ſuch

ſuch a diſtance from us, that it looks like a *thin, blue* Landskip, next to nothing; and hath not apparent Reality enough in it to raiſe our Deſires and Expectations.

And hence we are commanded to *ſet our Affections upon*, or as it is in the Original, *to mind thoſe Things that are above*, Col. iii. 2. and that by theſe *Things above*, he means the Enjoyments of Heaven, it's plain from *ver.* 1. where he expreſly tells us, that by the *above*, in which theſe Things are, he means Heaven, *where Chriſt ſits at the right Hand of God.* So that the Senſe of the Precept is this, that we ſhould *fix* in our Minds ſuch *lively* Repreſentations of the Glory and Reality of the Celeſtial State, as may raiſe in our Hearts a *longing* Deſire and *earneſt* Expectation of being made Partakers of it. Which *Hope* and *Expectation* he elſewhere injoins us to *put on for an Helmet*, *i. e.* for a neceſſary piece of *defenſive* Armour, againſt the Difficulties and Diſcouragements of our Chriſtian Warfare, 1 *Theſ.* v. 8. and *Heb.* vi. 19. *This hope which enters into that within the veil, i. e.* into Heaven, is ſaid to be the *Anchor of the Soul both ſure and ſtedfaſt, i. e.* 'Tis that which *ſtays* and *ſecures* the Soul in the midſt of thoſe many *Storms* of Temptation it meets withal in its *Voyage* to Heaven; and it being ſo, we are bid to *look to*, and imitate our Bleſſed Lord, *who for the joy that was ſet before him endured the Croſs, deſpiſing the Shame, and is now ſat down at the right Hand of God*, Heb. xii. 2. The meaning of all which is, that we ſhould earneſtly endeavour to *fix* in our Minds a *vigorous* Senſe and Expectation of that immortal Happineſs with which God hath promiſed to crown all that come off Conquerors from this Spiritual Warfare; that all along as we *march* we ſhould keep Heaven in our *Eye*, and *encourage* ourſelves with the *Hope* of it to *charge thro'* all thoſe Difficulties and Temptations, that oppoſe us in the way; in a word, that we ſhould frequently *awaken* in our Minds the glorious *Thoughts* of a bleſſed Immortality, and poſſeſs ourſelves with a lively *Expectation* of enjoying it, if we *hold out* to the End.

Which is a Duty of a vaſt Conſequence to us in the *Courſe* of our Spiritual Warfare. For Heaven being the *End* and *Reward* of our Warfare, muſt needs be the grand *Encouragement* thereunto; and conſequently if once we *loſe Sight* of Heaven, and ſuffer *earthly* Things to *Interpoſe* and *Eclipſe* the Glory and Reality of it, our Courage will never be able to *bear up* againſt thoſe manifold Temptations that do continually aſſault us. But whilſt we continue under a *lively Senſe* of that bleſſed Recompenſe of Reward, *that* will ſo *ſpirit* and *invigorate* our Reſolution, that nothing will be able to *withſtand* it; and all the *Terrors* and *Allurements* that Sin can propoſe, will be forced to *fly* before it, and to retreat like ſo many impotent Waves, that daſh againſt a Rock of Adamant. For while we are under a lively Senſe and Expectance of the Happineſs above, we live as it were in the *Mid-way* between Heaven and Earth, where we have an open Proſpect of the Glories of *both*, and do plainly ſee how *faint* and *dim* theſe *below* are in compariſon with thoſe *above*; how they are forced to *ſneak* and *diſappear* in the Preſence of thoſe eternal *Splendors*, and to *ſhrowd* their *vanquiſh'd* Beauties, as the Stars do when the Sun appears. And whilſt we *interchangeably* turn our Eyes from one to t'other how fruitleſly do the *Pleaſures, Profits* and *Honours* below, importune us to abandon the *Joys* and *Glories* above, and with what Indignation do we liſten to the Propoſals of ſuch a *ſenſeleſs* and *ridiculous* Exchange? And could we but always keep ourſelves at this ſtand, we ſhould be ſo *fortified* with the Sight of thoſe happy Regions *above*, that no Temptation from *below* would ever be able to *approach* us; and the Senſe that we are going on to that bleſſed State would carry us thro' all the *weary* Stages of our Duty, with an *indefatigable* Vigour. For what may a Man not do with Heaven in his *Eye*, with that *potent*, I had almoſt ſaid *omnipotent*, Encouragement before him? To *pull out* a right Eye, to *cut off* a right Hand, to *tear* a darling Luſt

from his Heart, even when 'tis *wrapt* about it, and *twisted* with its Strings, what an *easy* Atchievement is it to a Man that hath a Heaven of immortal Glories in his *View?* The Hope of which is enough to recommend even *Racks* and *Torments*, and turn the Flames of Martyrdom into a Bed of Roses. For 'twas this blessed Prospect that enabled the good old *Martyrs* to *triumph* so gloriously as they did in the midst of their Sufferings; they knew that a few Moments would put an *End* to their Miseries, and that when once they had *weather'd* those short *Storms*, they should arrive at a most blessed *Harbour*, and be crowned at their *Landing*; and that from thence they should look back with infinite Joy and Delight upon the dangerous *Sea* they had escaped, and for ever bless those *Storms* and *Winds* that drove them to that happy *Port*; for as the Author to the *Hebrews* tells us, *they sought a heavenly Country*, Heb. xi. 14, 16.

XI. And Lastly, To the successful *Progress* of our Christian Warfare, it is also necessary that we should live in the *frequent* Use of the *Publick Ordinances* and *Institutions* of our Religion; namely, in the religious Observation of the *Lord's Day*, and in frequent *Communion* with one another in the *Holy Sacrament*, both which are of great Use to us in the *Course* and *Progress* of our spiritual Warfare. For as for the *Lord's Day*, it is *instituted*, and ever since the Apostle's Time hath been *observed* in the Christian Church, as a Day of *Publick* Worship and *Weekly* Thanksgiving for our Saviour's *Resurrection*, in which the great Work of our Redemption was *consummated*. And certainly it must needs be of vast Advantage to be *one* Day in *seven* sequestred from the World, and imployed in *divine* Offices, in solemn *Prayers*, *Praises*, and *Thanksgivings*, and to be obliged to *assist* and *edify* one another by the mutual *Example* and *Union* of our Devotions; to hear the Duties of our Religion *explained*, the Sins against it *reprehended*, and the Doctrines of it *unfolded* and *reduced* to plain and easy Principles of Practice; what a mighty advantage might we reap from all these blessed *Ministries*, if we would but attend to them with that *Concern* and *Seriousness* which the matter of them *requires* and *deserves?* Especially, if when the *Publick* Offices are over, we would not *let loose* ourselves all the rest of the Day, as we too frequently do, to our *secular* Cares and Diversions, and thereby *choak* those good Instructions we have heard, and *stifle* those devout and pious Affections which have been raised and excited in us; but instead of so doing, we would devote at least some good Portion of it to the *Instruction* of our Families, and to the *private* Exercise of our Religion, to *Meditation* and *Prayer*, to the *Examination* of ourselves concerning our *past* Behaviour, and the *re-inforcing* our Resolution to behave ourselves better for the future; if, I say, we would thus spend our *Lord's Day*, we should doubtless find ourselves *better* Men for it all the *Week* after; we should go into the World again with much *better* Affections, and *stronger* Resolutions, with our Graces more *vigorous*, and our bad Inclinations more *reduced* and *tamed*: and whereas the *Jews* were to gather *Manna* enough on their *sixth* Day, to feed their *Bodies* on the ensuing *Sabbath*, we should gather *Manna* enough upon our *Sabbath*, to feed and strengthen our *Souls* all the *six Days* after.

But to this we must also add frequent *Communions* with one another in the *Holy Sacrament*, which is an Ordinance *instituted* on purpose by our blessed Saviour, for the *improving* and *furthering* us in our Christian Warfare. For besides that herein we have one of the most *puissant* Arguments against Sin represented by *visible* Signs to our Sense, *viz.* The bloody *Sacrifice* of our blessed Lord to *expiate* and make *Atonement* for it; besides that those *bleeding* Wounds of his which are here represented by the *breaking* of the *Bread*, and *pouring out of the Wine*, do proclaim our Sins his *Assassins* and *Murderers*, the thought of which, if we had any ingenuity in us, were enough to *incense* in us the most *implacable* Indignation against them; besides that, his Sufferings

ings for our Sins, of which this sacred *Solemnity* is a *lively* Picture, do horribly *remonstrate* God's *Displeasure* against them, who would not be induced to pardon them upon any *meaner* Expiation than the Blood of his Son, than which *Hell* itself is not a more *dreadful* Argument to *scare* and *terrify* us from them; in a word, besides that, his so freely *submitting* and *offering* up himself to be a *Propitiation* for us, of which this Holy Festival is a solemn *Commemoration*, is an Expression of *Kindness* sufficient to *captivate* the most *ungrateful* Souls, and *extort* Obedience from them; besides all this, I say, as it is a *Feast* upon the *Sacrifice* of his Body and Blood, it is a Federal Rite, whereby God and we, by *feasting* together, do, according to the antient Customs both of *Jews* and *Heathens* mutually *oblige* ourselves to one another; whereby God, by *giving* us the *mystical* Bread and Wine, and we by *receiving* them, do mutually *ingage* ourselves to one another upon those sacred Pledges of Christ's Body and Blood, that we will *faithfully* perform each other's Part of that everlasting *Covenant* which was purchased by him. And what can be a greater *Restraint* to us when we are solicited to any Sin, than the sense of being under such a dreadful *Vow* and *Obligation*? With what face *dare* we listen to any Temptation to Evil, when we remember how lately we solemnly *ingaged* ourselves to the contrary, and took the *Sacrament* upon it? And verily I doubt 'tis *this* that lies at the bottom of that seeming *modest* pretence of *Unworthiness*, which Men are wont to urge in Excuse for their *Neglect* of the Sacrament; namely, That they *love* their Lusts, and cannot resolve to *part* with them, and therefore are *afraid* to make such a solemn *Abjuration* of them, as the eating and drinking the Consecrated Elements implies. And I confess, if *this* be their Reason, they are *unworthy* indeed, the more *shame* for them; but 'tis such an *Unworthiness* as is so far from *excusing*, that it only *aggravates* their neglect. For, for any Man to plead that he *dares* not receive the Sacrament, because he is resolved to *sin on*, is to make that which is his *Fault*, his *Apology*, and to excuse *one* Sin with *another*. Wherefore if we are heartily *resolved* by the Grace of God to *reform* and *amend*, let us abstain no longer from this great Federal Rite, upon Pretence of *Unworthiness*. For 'tis by the use of *this*, among *other* Means, that we are to *improve* and grow more and more *worthy*. For the very *Repetition* of our Resolution, as I have shewed above, is a proper Means of *strengthning* and *confirming* it; and certainly it must needs be much more so, when 'tis *renewed* and *repeated* with the Solemnity of a Sacrament. And therefore it is worth observing, how much Care our Lord hath taken in the very Constitution of our Religion, to oblige us to a *constant*, *solemn* Repetition of our good Resolutions. For at our first entrance into *Covenant* with him, we are to be *baptized*, in which Solemnity we do openly *renounce* the Devil and all his Works, and religiously *devote* ourselves to his Service. But because we are apt to *forget* this our Baptismal *Vow*, and the *Matter* of it is *continually* to be performed, and more than *one* World depends upon it, therefore he hath thought fit not to *trust* wholly to this *first* Engagement, but hath so methodized our Religion, as that we are ever and anon obliged to give him *new* Security. For which End, he hath instituted this *other* Sacrament, which is not like that of *Baptism*, to be received by us *once for all*, but to be often *reiterated* and *repeated*, that so upon the frequent *Returns* of it, we might still be obliged to *repeat* over our old Vows of Obedience. For he hath not only injoyned us that we should *do this in remembrance of him*, Luke xxii. 19. *i. e.* That we should celebrate this sacred Festival in the Memory of his Passion; but by thus doing the Apostle tells us, we are to *continue* the Memorial of it to the end of the World, or *to shew his Death till he comes*, 1 Cor. xi. 26. And that this doth not, like the Precept of *Baptism*, oblige us for once only and no more, is evident from the foregoing Words of this last recited Text, *as often as ye eat this Bread and drink this Cup*, which plainly shews, that these Sacramental

Elements are to be *more* than *once* received by us. 'Tis true, how *often* 'tis to be done neither Christ nor his Apostles have any where *defined*, but if we consult *Primitive Example* (which in the Absence of *express* Precept is the *best* Rule to determine ourselves by) we shall find that it was very *frequently* received. For from some Passages in the Acts of the Apostles, it seems *probable* that Christians did then communicate *every Day*, as particularly *Acts* ii. 46. where they are said *to continue Daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking Bread,* κατ' οἶκον, *in the House*, that is, as it seems *probable*, in some upper Room of the Temple; tho *perhaps* this *Daily* may refer only to the *Lord's Day*, agreeably to that, *Acts* xx. 7. *On the first Day of the Week when the Disciples came together to break Bread,* Paul *preached unto them.* But it's certain that whensoever they assembled to the *Publick* Worship, they closed it with the *Lord's Supper*; which they did for a great while in the *Western* Churches *every Day* in the Week, and in the *Eastern* as St. *Basil* tells us, Epist. 289. *four times* a Week, besides *Festivals*. So that allowing for our *Declensions* from the *Primitive* Zeal and Devotion, one would think that to communicate now *once* in *four* Weeks should be a very *moderate* Proportion. But as for those that *wholly* neglect this sacred Institution, for my own part I see not how they can *excuse* themselves from being guilty of a wilful *Rebellion* against their Saviour; or with what Confidence they can expect either that he should *assist* them with his *Grace* on the *Way*, or *crown* them with his *Salvation* in the End, when they so *perversely* turn their backs upon an Ordinance which he hath solemnly instituted for a *Conveyance* of the *one*, and a *Seal* of the *other*.

But would we take that Care that becomes us, to *prepare* ourselves for, and *frequent* this holy Institution, there is no doubt but we should find it of mighty Advantage to us in the whole *Course* of our Religion. For till we are arrived to a *confirmed* State of Good, our holy Fervours will be very apt to *cool*, our good Purposes to *slacken* and *unwind*, and our virtuous Endeavours to *languish* and *tire*; and therefore unless we take care frequently to *revive* our Religion with this spiritual *Repast* and *Restorative*, and still to add *new* Fewel to it as the Flame decays, it will quickly *pine away* and *expire*. But if upon the *solemn* Returns of this sacred Festival, we would *constantly* come with due Preparation to our Master's Table, and here *renew* our Vows, *re-invigorate* our Resolutions, *repair* our Decays, and put our *sluggish* Graces into a new *Fermentation*, we should find our Religion not only *live* but *thrive*, and be still acquiring *new* Degrees of Strength and Activity. But because this Argument hath been already so fully handled in our Practical Treatises, particularly by the Reverend Dr. *Patrick* in his *Mensa Mystica*, and *Christian Sacrifice*, I shall refer the Reader thither for the farther Consideration of it.

And thus, with all the Brevity I could, I have endeavoured to give an Account of those *Duties* which are necessary in the *Course* and *Progress* of our *Christian Warfare*.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

Containing certain Motives *to animate Men against the* Difficulty *of these* Duties *which appertain to the* Course *of our* Christian Warfare.

HOW *necessary* and *useful* to us those afore-named Duties are in the *Course* of our Christian Warfare, hath been sufficiently shewn. So that now there is nothing that our *Sloth* and *Unwillingness* can object against them, but only this, that they are very *difficult*, and do require more of our *Time*, and *Care*, and *Pains*, than we can conveniently spare from our other necessary Occasions; that the Practice of them is so *unpleasant* and *severe*, and attended with so much *Cumber* and *Trouble*, that we very much doubt we shall never be able to *go thro'* with them. And therefore to remove this Objection out of Mens way, and to excite them to the Practice of these necessary Duties, I shall for a Conclusion of this Argument add, to what hath been said of it, these following *Considerations*,

1. That whatsoever *Difficulty* there is in the Practice of them, we may *thank ourselves* for it.

2. That in the *Course* of our *Sin* there is a great deal of *Difficulty*, as well as in our Warfare *against* it.

3. That how *difficult* soever this Warfare may be, it must be *endured*, or that which is a great deal *worse*.

4. That tho it be *difficult*, yet there is nothing in it but what the Grace of God will render *possible* to us, if we be not *wanting* to our selves.

5. That the Practice of these Duties is not so *difficult*, but that it is fairly consistent with all our other necessary *Occasions* and *Diversions*.

6. That the *Difficulty* is such as will certainly *abate* and *wear off* by Degrees, if we *constantly* practise them.

7. That with the *difficulty* of them, there is a world of present *Peace* and *Satisfaction* intermingled.

8. That their *Difficulty* is abundantly *compensated* by the final *Reward* of them.

I. Consider, That whatsoever *Difficulty* there is in the Practice of them, we may *thank ourselves* for it. For if we had betaken ourselves to the Practice of Religion as soon as we were *capable* of it, before we had *entered* ourselves into sinful Courses, and had *therein* contracted sinful Habits and Inclinations, we might have *prevented* those Difficulties which we now *complain of*. For our Religion was made *for* and adapted *to* our Nature, and would have sweetly *accorded* with all its Affections and Propensions, had we not *vitiated* them by our own wilful Sin, and clapt a *preternatural* Biass upon them. But tho the Light be *naturally* congruous to the Eye, yet if thro' a Distillation of ill Humours into it the Eye grows *sore* and *weak*, there is nothing more *grievous* and *offensive* to it. And so it is with Religion, which to the *pure* and *uncontaminated* Nature of a Man, is the most *grateful* and *agreeable* thing in the World; but if by our own ill Government, we *disease* our Nature, and *deprave* its Primitive Constitution, it is no wonder that Religion which was so well *proportioned* to it in its *Purity*, should sit *hard* and *uneasy* upon it, in its *Apostasy* and Corruption. For to a Man that is in a *Fever*, every thing is *bitter*, even Honey, which when he is *well*, is exceeding *sweet* and *grateful*; but the *Bitterness* which he tastes is not in the *Honey*, but in the *Gall* which overflows his own Palate; and so to a Nature that is *diseased* with any unnatural Lust, that which is most *congruous* to *itself*, will

will be most *nauseous* to its *Disease*; and those Duties which in its *Health*, 'twould have embraced with the greatest *Pleasure*, will in its *Sickness* be the greatest *Burden* and *Oppression* to it. And when we have spoiled the *Purity* of our Constitution, and are *degenerated* from the *human* Nature into the *brutal* or *diabolical*, it is no great wonder that the Religion of a *Man* should be a Burden to the Nature of a *Beast* or a *Devil*. So that whatsoever *Difficulties* there are in Religion, they arise not out of the Nature of the *Things* it requires, but out of the perverse *Indispositions* of our *Natures* to them; and these were for the most part contracted by *ourselves*; so that instead of *complaining* of the Difficulty, we ought to *strive* and *contend* the more earnestly against it, because we may *thank ourselves* for it. When a Man hath play'd the Fool, and set his House *on Fire*, the Sense of his own Folly ought to make him more industrious to *extinguish* it; but if, instead of so doing, he should sit with his Hands in his Bosom, and complain of the Mischief, and the Difficulty of *stopping* it, what would Folks say of him? Mischievous Creature, doth it become thee to sit here *idly* complaining of the Effect of thy own Villany, whilst 'tis yet in thy Power, wouldst thou but *bestir* thy self, to *quench* the Flame, and prevent the *spreading* of it? For shame get up, and do thy utmost Endeavour to *repair* thy *own* Act, and to extinguish this spreading Mischief, of which thou art the *Author*. Since therefore we have been so obstinately foolish, as to *set fire* to our own Souls, and *kindle* in them by our vicious Courses, such destructive *Flames* of unnatural Lust, how monstrously *ridiculous* is it, whilst 'tis yet in our Power to extinguish them, to sit *whining* and *complaining* of the Difficulty of it, and in the mean time permit them to *rage* and *burn on* without Interruption? O miserable Men, if they are so *hard* to be quenched who may ye *thank* for it? Was it not you that kindled them, and do you sit idly *complaining* of your own Act, when you should be the more industrious to *repair* the Mischief of it, because it is *your own*: For shame *arise* and *bestir* yourselves, and since you are conscious that the *Difficulties* of your Religion are of your own *creating*, and that those Lusts, which *indispose* ye to it, are the Products of your own *Actions*; let this excite you to a more *vigorous* Endeavour to *subdue* and *conquer* them.

II. Consider, that in the *Course* of your *Sins* there is a great deal of *Difficulty*, as well as in your Warfare *against* them: For I dare appeal to your own Experience, whether you have not found a great deal of *Hardship* in Wickedness, especially while you were *educating* and *training up* your Natures to it? Did not your Nature oftentimes *recoil* and *start* and *boggle* at your vicious Actions; and were you not fain sometimes to *curb*, and sometimes to *spur* it, to commit many *Outrages* and *Violences* upon it, *whilst* you were *backing* and *managing* it, before you could reduce it to a *Thorow-pace* in Iniquity; how often have you put your *modest* Nature to the *Blush*, at the Sense of a *filthy* and *uncomely* Action, whilst your wicked Will hath been dragging it along like a *timorous* Virgin to an Adulterer's Bed; and what terrible *Shrieks* have your Consciences many times given in the midst of your sinful Commissions, when you were acting the first *Rapes* upon your Innocence; how many a *pensive* Mood hath the *Review* of your sinful Pleasures cost ye, and what *Swarms* of Horror and dreadful Expectation hath the *Reflection* on your past Guilts raised in your Minds? and then with what excessive *Difficulty* have you been fain to practise some Vices, only to get an *Habit* of practising them more *easily*; how often have you been forced to *swallow* Sickness, to drink dead *Palsies* and foaming *Epilepsies*, to render your Intemperances *familiar* to you, and in what *Qualms*, and *fainting* Sweats, and *sottish* Confusions have you many times awaked, before ever you could connaturalize your *midnight* Revels to your Temper? And when, with so much *Labour* and *Violence* you have pretty well *trained* and *exercised* yourselves in this hellish Warfare, and thereby render'd it *natural* and *habitual* to you, to how many In-

conveniences

conveniences hath it daily *exposed* you, and what *base* and *unmanly* Shifts hath it put you upon, to *extricate* yourselves out of those *Difficulties* wherein it hath *involved* you? What violent *Passions* and *Perturbations* doth it raise in your Minds, and into what *wild* Tumults of Action doth it frequently *hurry* you? In a Word, how doth it *perplex* and *intrigue* the whole Course of your Lives, and *intangle* ye in a Labyrinth of *Knavish* Tricks and Collusions; so that many times you are at your *Wits end*, and know not which way to *turn* yourselves? All *these* Difficulties, and a great many *more*, which I cannot presently think of, you must have contended with in a *sinful* Course of Action, if you have made any considerable Experiment of it.

And do you complain of the *Difficulty* of persevering in Religion; *you* that have so *couragiously* persevered in a *worse* Way against Difficulties that are as *great*, all Things considered, if not *greater*; *you* that have hitherto sinn'd on so *industriously*, that have broke thro' so many strong *Barricadoes* to come at and enjoy your Lusts, are *you* not ashamed to *start* and *boggle*, as you do, at the Difficulties of Virtue and Religion? Look but how the *industrious* Sinner *upbraids* you? His Way *leads* directly to *Ruin*, and he *knows* it, and yet he *presses on* couragiously, as if he were ambitious to be a *Heroe* in Iniquity, and *charges* thro' all the *Modesty* of Human Nature, thro' all his native *Sense* of a God and a Divine Vengeance; he *marches* forward thro' *Infamy* and *Diseases*, thro' *Dangers*, and a world of *Inconveniences*, and offers a kind of *Violence* to *Hell*, as if he meant to *force* open its brazen Portal, and enter *headlong* into it, before 'tis ready to receive him, whilst you, in the mean time, like a Company of *Crest-fallen* Creatures, stand *shivering* at a few trifling Difficulties in your Way, tho you have *Heaven* for your *End*, and a *Crown* of Glory for your Reward.

In short, therefore, This is the true State of your Case; choose which side you please, whether to march under *Christ*'s or the Devil's Banner; you must expect before-hand to encounter *some* Difficulties, yea, and perhaps as great on the *one* side as on the *other*; and if so, then you have little else to do but to compare their *Ends*, and to consider which of the Two is most *eligible*, a Crown of *Glory*, or Eternal *Torment*.

III. Consider that how *difficult* soever this your Spiritual Warfare may be, it must be *endured*, or that which is much more *intolerable*. I confess, were it not absolutely *necessary*, we might, with some colour of Reason, urge the *Difficulty* of it to *excuse* ourselves from *undertaking* and *prosecuting* it; but when our Case is such as that we must either *conquer* or *perish*, *swim* thro', or *sink* under the Difficulties we *complain* of, the Matter will admit of no farther *Debate*, but we must e'en resolve of the *Two* Evils, to *choose* that which is the *least*. When the Ship hath *sprung* a Leak, 'tis a madness for the Mariners to sit still and complain of the *Pains* and *Labour* of Pumping; for in the Extremity they are in, there is no more to be said, they must *pump* or *perish*; and it is not to be debated, where there is so vast an *Inequality* between the Objects of their Choice, which of the *Two* they were best to fix upon; whether to *take Pains* for the present to *secure* the Ship, or to *sit still* and suffer themselves to be *swallowed up* in the Ocean. And thus it is in the Case before us; our Soul hath sprung a Leak, and let into its *Holds* those *Stygian* Waters of *Sensual* and *Diabolical* Lust, which will *sink* us down to *Hell*, if they be not pumpt out again; and this is not to be done without a great deal of Labour and Difficulty: But what then; were we not better labour for a *while* than perish *for ever?* Do we talk of *Labour*, when our Souls are *at Stake*, and our immortal Life is upon the Brink of an everlasting *well* or *ill* Being? In other Cases we never think much to endure a *present* Inconvenience for the Prevention of a future Mischief; we are content to *fast*, when we perceive it's necessary to *obviate* an approaching *Fever*; to be *cupp'd* and *scarified* with all the Artifice of Pain to *prevent* or *remove* a dangerous Disease;

Disease; and in all other Cases, are generally willing to prolong our Torment, that we may be the longer a dying; except where the *Prescription* is *Virtue*, and the *Death* prescribed against is *eternal*; tho *this* be the most formidable Mischief of all, as being the utmost *Consummation* of human Misery, and compared with which all the *Labours* and *Difficulties* of Religion have not the Proportion of a gentle *Flea-biting* to the acutest Torments of the *Rack* or *Stone*: For I beseech you to consider, Will it not be easier for you to endure the *short* Agonies of a bitter Repentance, than the horrid Despair of a damned Ghost for ever; to thwart a *foolish* and *unreasonable* Lust, than to lie *roaring* to Eternity upon the *Rack* of a guilty Conscience? Is there any Proportion between your *abstaining* from the Pleasures of Sin, that are but for a *Moment*, and your being *excluded* from Heaven and all Hope of Happiness *for ever*? Alas! if it be so *difficult* to you to *contend* with an evil Habit, *to struggle* with a stiff and obstinate Inclination, how difficult will it be to *dwell with everlasting Burnings*, and suffer the dire Effects of an *unappeasable* Vengeance to Eternity? Wherefore, since we are under an absolute Necessity of enduring the *one* or the *other*, in the Name of God, let us act like Men, and of the *Two* Evils choose that which is most *tolerable*.

IV. Consider, That tho it be *difficult*, yet there is nothing in it, but what the Grace of God will render *possible* to us, if we be not *wanting* to ourselves. I confess the *Necessity* of it would be no Argument to engage us to undertake it, were it not a *possible* Undertaking; yea and readily acknowledge, that it very far exceeds *our* poor Possibility *singly* and *nakedly* considered: So that if we were left to *struggle* with the Difficulty of it in our own single Strength, we might justly *despair* of Success, and so tamely *lie down* and *yield* ourselves *foil'd* and *defeated*. But, God be praised, this is not our Case; for tho when we cast our Eyes upon the many violent Inclinations to evil that are *within* us, and upon the *numberless* Temptations to evil that are *about us*; when we seriously reflect upon the *Weakness* of our Reason, and the *Strength* of our *Lust*, and the *Number* and *Nearness* and *Prevalency* of those Objects from without, that are continually *pressing upon* and *assaulting* our good Resolutions; tho, I say, when we reflect upon all this, we are ready to cry out as *Elisha*'s Servant did, when he beheld the City compassed with Horses and with Chariots, *Alas Master, how shall we do?* How shall we be able to withstand all this mighty Army of Enemies? Yet if we turn our Eyes from our *own* Weakness, and our *Enemies* Strength, to those gracious Promises of *Assistance*, which the Father of Mercies hath made to us, we shall quickly be able to answer *ourselves*, as *Elisha* did *him*, *Fear not*, O my Soul, *for they that are with us are more*, and more powerful, *than they that are against us*: For we have with us not only the *outward* Arguments of Religion, which are of Infinite *more* Force than any *outward* Inducement to Vice whatsoever; we have with us not only the holy *Angels* of God, who are as *willing*, and more *able* to *direct* and *strengthen* us, than all the infernal *Furies* to *insnare* and *captivate* us; but we have with us also the Almighty Spirit of God, who by the *Oeconomy* of Heaven, and the *Promise* of our Lord, is obliged to *minister* to us in all our Necessities, and to *aid* and *assist* us against all those Difficulties, which would be otherwise *too hard* for us, if we were left to *ourselves*. So that if we do but hold true to our own Interest, and take care that we do not drive him away from us, by siding wilfully with our own Enemies against him, we *shall* not, no, we *cannot* miscarry; unless (which is *impossible*) some such Temptation should befal us, as neither *we* nor *he* can resist and cope with: For till by our wilful Sin we have forfeited our Title to the Promise of his Assistance, we are as sure of *his* Help in all Things that are necessary, as we can be of our *own* Endeavour; and 'tis not more in our Power to do what we *can* by the Strength of our own *Faculties*, than 'tis to engage him to *enable* us to do what we *cannot* without his Aid and *Assistance*: For by faith-

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fully *endeavouring* to persevere in well-doing, we intitle ourselves to all the necessary Assistance of his Grace; and so long as this *Title* continues, we are Masters not only of our *own* Strength, but of *his* too, and can do not only whatsoever is within our *own* Power *without* him, but also whatsoever is in *his Power* concurring *with ours*.

So that tho our *Warfare* be *difficult*, it cannot be *impossible*, unless *we* will have it so: For to be sure there is nothing in it that can be too hard for *God*'s Grace *Cooperating* with the Powers of *our* Nature; and therefore there can be nothing in it *too* hard for *us*, whilst 'tis in our Power to *secure* ourselves of *that* his gracious Cooperation.

Wherefore let us stand *boggling* no longer at the Difficulty of our Progress in Religion, since, God be praised, there is nothing required of us beyond what we are *able*; do but your Part, which is only what you can, and then doubt not but God will do his; put forth but your *honest hearty* Endeavour, and earnestly *implore* his Aid and Assistance, and if *then* you miscarry, let Heaven answer for it: But if upon a Pretence that your Work is too *difficult*, and your Enemies too *mighty* for you, you lay down your Arms, and resolve to contend with them no longer, let Heaven and Earth judge between God and you, which is to be charged with your Ruin; God that so graciously *offered* you his Help, that stretched out his Hand to *raise* ye up, tendered you his Spirit to *guard* and *conduct* ye thro' all Oppositions to eternal Happiness; or you that would not be *persuaded* to do any thing for yourselves, but rather chose to *perish* with *Ease*, than take any *Pains* to be *saved*.

V. Consider that the Practice of these Duties is not so *difficult*, but that it is fairly consistent with all your other necessary *Occasions*. When Men are told how many Duties are necessary to their successful *Progress* in Religion, what *Patience* and *Constancy*, what frequent *Examinations* and *Trials* of themselves, what lively *Thoughts* and *Expectations* of Heaven, &c. they are apt to conclude, that if they should engage to do *all* this, they must resolve to do nothing *else*, but even shake Hands with all their *secular* Business, and Diversions, and *cloyster* up themselves from all other Affairs; which is a very great Mistake, proceeding either from their not *considering*, or not *understanding* the Nature of these Religious Exercises, the greatest Part of which are such as are to be wholly transacted in the Mind, whose Motions and Operations are much more *nimble* and *expedite* than those of the Body, and so may be very well *intermixt* with our *secular* Employments, without any *Lett* or *Hindrance* to them: For what great Time is there required for a Man now and then to revolve a few *wise* and *useful* Thoughts in his Mind, to *consider* the Nature of an Action when it *occurs*, and *reflect* upon an Error when it's *past* and hath *escaped* him? I can consider a Temptation when it's *approaching* me, and with a Thought or two of Heaven or Hell, *arm* my Resolution against it in the twinkling of an Eye; I can look up to Heaven with an Eye of earnest *Expectance*, and send my Soul thither in a short *Ejaculation*, without interrupting my Business; and yet these, and such as these, do make up a great Part of those Religious Exercises, wherein the proper Duty of our *Christian Warfare* consists. And tho to the due Performance of these Duties, it will be sometimes necessary that our Minds should dwell *longer* upon them, yet it is to be considered, that when once we are *entred* upon the Practice of them, our Mind will be much more at *leisure* to attend to them; for then 'twill be in a great Measure taken off from its *wild* and *unreasonable* Vagaries, from its *sinful* Designs and *leud* Contrivances, from its *Phantastick* Complacencies in the *Pleasures* of Sin, and *anxious* Reflections on the *Guilt* and *Danger* of it; and when all this Rubbish is thrown out of the Mind, there will be room enough for good Thoughts to dwell in it, without *interfering* with any of our necessary *Cares* and *Diversions*. For would we but give these our *Religious* Exercises *as much* room in our Minds, as we did

heretofore freely allow to our *Sins*; they would ask no *more*, but leave us as much at *leisure* for our other Affairs *as ever*.

I confess there are some of these Duties that exact of us their *fixt* and *stated* Portions of Time, such as our Morning *Consideration* and *Prayer*, our Evening *Examination* and *Prayer*, our religious Observation of the *Lord's Day*, and our *preparing* for and *receiving* the Holy Sacrament; but all this may be very well spared without any *Prejudice* to any of our lawful Occasions: For what great matter of Time doth it ask for a Man to think over a few *good Thoughts* in the Morning, and *fore-arm* his Mind with them against the Temptations of the Day; to recommend himself to God in a *short, pithy*, and *affectionate* Prayer, and *repeat* his Purpose and Resolution of Obedience; what an easy Matter were it for you to *borrow* so many Moments as would suffice for *this* Purpose from your *Bed*, and your *Comb* and *Looking-glass*? And as for the Evening, when your Business is over, it's a very hard Case, if you cannot spare so much Time either from your Company or Refreshments, as to make a short *Review* of the Actions of the Day; to *confess* and beg *Pardon* for the *Evils* you have fallen into, or to *bless* God for the *Good* you have *done*, and the *Evils* you have *avoided*; and then to recommend yourselves to his Grace and Protection for the future. And as for your Religious Observation of the *Lord's Day*, it is only the *seventh* part of your Time; and can you think much to devote *that*, or at least the *greatest* Part of that, to him who gives you your *Being* and *Duration*? And lastly, as for your receiving the *Lord's Supper*, 'tis, at most, but *once* a Month that you are *invited* to it, and 'tis a hard Case, if out of so great a Proportion of Time, you cannot afford a *few* Hours to *examine* your *Defects*, and to *quicken* your *Graces*, and to *dress* and *prepare* yourselves for that blessed Commemoration. Alas! how easy were all this to a *willing* Mind? And if we had but *half* that Concern for our Souls and everlasting Interest that we have for our Bodies, we should count such Things as these not *worth* our mentioning. How *disingenuous* therefore is it for Men to make such *tragical* Out-cries, as they do of the *Hardship* and *Difficulty* of this *Spiritual Warfare*, when there is nothing at all in it that *intrenches* either on their *secular* Callings, or *necessary* Diversions; when they may be going *onward* to Heaven, while they are doing their *Business*, and *mortifying* their Lusts, even in the Enjoyment of their *Recreations*, and so take their Pleasure both *here* and *hereafter*.

VI. Consider that the Difficulty of these Duties is such, as will certainly *abate* and *wear off*, by Degrees, if we *constantly* practise them: For in all Undertakings whatsoever, it is *Use* that makes *Perfectness*, and that which is exceeding *hard* to us at *first*, either thro' want of *Skill* to manage, or *Inclination* to practise it, will, by Degrees, grow *easier* and *easier*, as we are more and more *accustomed* and *familiarized* to it. And this we shall find by Experience, if we constantly exercise ourselves in these *Progressive* Duties of our Religion, which, to a Mind that hath *been* altogether *unacquainted* with them, will, at *first*, be very difficult. 'Twill go against the Grain of a *wild* and *ungoverned* Nature, to be confined from its *extravagant* Ranges by the *strict* Ties of a Religious *Discipline*; and to reduce a *roving* Mind to severe Consideration, or a *fickle* one to Constancy and Resolution; or an *unreflecting* one to Self-examination; to raise up an *earthly* Mind to *heavenly* Thoughts and Expectations; and confine a *listless* and *regardless* one to strict Watchfulness and Circumspection; to confine a *carnal* Mind to *frequent* Sacraments; or an *indevout* and careless one to its *daily* and *weekly* Periods of Devotion, will, at the first, no doubt, be very *painful* and *tedious*; but after we have *persisted* in, and for a while *accustomed* ourselves to it, we shall find it quickly grow more *natural* and *easy* to us, and from being *grievous*, it will become *tolerable*, from being tolerable *easy*, and from being easy *delightful*: For when once we come to feel the good Effects of those Duties in our Natures, how fast

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our Lusts do *decline*, our Dispositions *mend*, and all our Graces *improve* in the Use of them, the Sense of this will mightily *indear* and *ingratiate* them to us: Just as is it with a *Scholar*, when he first *enters* upon the Methods of *Learning*, they are very *tedious* and *irksome* to him; the Pains of *reading*, *observing*, and *recollecting*, the *Confinement* to a Study, and the *racking* his Brains with severe *Reasoning* and *Discourse*, are Things that he cannot easily away with, till he hath been *inured* and *accustomed* to them a while, and then they grow more *natural* and *easy* to him; but when he comes to be sensible of the great *Advantages* he reaps by his Labour, how it *raises* and *improves* his Understanding, *enlarges* its Prospect, and *furnishes* its Conception with *brave* and *useful* Notions; then do his Labours, which were formerly so *grievous*, become not only *easy*, but *delectable* to him. And even so it is with these *spiritual* Exercises of Religion, which to *unexperienced* Persons, that are yet but newly entered upon them, will be very *painful* and *troublesome*; but if they have but *Patience* and *Courage* to hold on, Custom will quickly render them more *tolerable*, and when they have practised them so long, as to find and perceive the blessed Effects of them, how much they have contributed to the *reforming* their Tempers, *reducing* their Inclinations, *filing* and *polishing* their rough and misshapen Natures; with what *amiable* Graces, *divine* and *god-like* Dispositions they have *adorned* and *beautified* them; their Sense and Feeling of *this* will convert them all into *delightful* Recreations. Thus as the Custom of them will render them *easy*, so the blessed Fruits of them will make them *delectable*; the former will render them *facil* as Nature, the latter *eligible* as Reward: And if so, why should we be discouraged, faint-hearted Creatures that we are, at those little *present* Difficulties, which our Diligence will soon *wear off* and convert into *Ease* and *Pleasure*?

VII. Consider, that with the *Difficulty* of them there is a World of present *Peace* and *Satisfaction* intermingled. If you *fall back* again to your old Lusts, instead of these *present* Difficulties you *start* at, you must expect to have the *Trouble* of a guilty Soul to contend with; which, if you have any Sense of God, and of *Good* and *Evil*, will be much more *grievous* to you than they: But if you *go on*, you will carry with you a *quiet* and a *satisfied* Mind, a Conscience that will entertain you all along with such *sweet* and *calm* Reflections, as will abundantly *compensate* you for all the Hardships and Difficulties you encounter on the Way; that with innumerable Iterations will be always *resounding* to your *honest* Endeavours those *best* and *sweetest* Echoes, *Well done good and profitable Servant*, how *bravely* hast thou acquitted thyself, how *manfully* hast thou *stood* to thy Duty against all Oppositions, and with what a *gallant* Resolution hast thou *repulsed* those Temptations that bore up against thee? Now for a Man to have his own Mind continually *applauding* him, and *crowning* his Actions with the Approbations of his Conscience, is Encouragement enough to *balance* a thousand Difficulties; and the Sense that he hath done his Duty, and that the God *above*, and the Vice-God *within* him, are both *satisfied* and *pleased* with him, will give him such a *grateful* Relish of each Action of his *Warfare*, that the *Difficulty* will only serve to inhance the *Pleasure* of it.

And as he will have great *Peace* and *Satisfaction* whilst he is *contending* with these Difficulties, so when he hath so far *conquered* them, as that they are no longer able to *curb* and *with-hold* him from the *free* and *vigorous* Exercise of the heavenly Virtues, but in despite of them, he can easily *moderate* his Passions and Appetites by the Laws of his Reason, and freely *love*, *adore* and *imitate*, *submit* to, and *confide* in the ever-blessed God, and chearfully exert an unforced *Plainness* and *Simplicity*, *Good-will* and *Charity*, *Submission* and *Condescension*, *Peace* and *Concord* towards all Men; when, I say, he hath so far *surmounted* the Difficulties of his *Warfare*, as that with any Measure of Freedom and Vigor he can put forth all these heavenly Virtues, he will find him-

ſelf not only in a *quiet*, but in a *heavenly Condition*. For theſe heavenly Graces are the *Palate* by which the immortal Mind *taſtes* and *reliſhes* its Heaven, the bleſſed *Organs* and *Senſories* by which it *feels* and *perceives* the Joys of the World to come, and without which it can no more *reliſh* and *enjoy* them, than the ſenſeleſs Hive can the Sweetneſs of the Honey that is in it. And conſequently the more *quick* and *vivacious* theſe heavenly Organs of the Mind are, and the more they are disburden'd of thoſe *carnal* and *deviliſh* Luſts that *blunt* their Senſe and Perception, the more *accurately* they will *taſte* the Joys and Pleaſures of Heaven. So that when by the conſtant Practice of the *Warfaring* Duties of Religion, we have *conquered* thoſe bad Inclinations of our Natures, which render the heavenly Virtues ſo *difficult* to us, and do ſo *clog* and *incumber* us in the Exerciſe of them, we ſhall find ourſelves in a *Heaven* upon *Earth*, and each Act of Virtue will be a *Preſenſion* and *Foretaſte* of the Joys of the Celeſtial Life: And being arrived at this bleſſed State in which all heavenly Virtue is ſo *connaturalized* to us, the ſweet Experience we ſhall have of the *unſpeakable* Joys and Pleaſures it abounds with, will cauſe us to look back wtth wondrous *Content* and *Satisfaction* upon all thoſe Difficulties we *contended* with in our Way to it, and bleſs thoſe *Prayers* and *Tears*, and *Strivings* with ourſelves, thoſe tedious *Watchings* and *Self-examinations*, &c. by which we have now at laſt *conquered* and *ſubdued* them.

Wherefore, ſince the Practice of theſe our *Warfaring Duties* hath ſo much *preſent* Peace going along with it, and ſince by its natural Drift and Tendency, it is leading us *forward* to a State of ſo much *Pleaſure* and *Satisfaction*, what a Madneſs is it, for a Man to be beaten off from it, by thoſe *preſent little* Difficulties that attend it! What Man that conſults his own Intereſt, would ever deſiſt from the proſecuting ſuch a *gainful* Warfare, in which, to make him amends for the preſent Pains it puts him to, he is not only poſſeſt of *Peace* of Conſcience for the *preſent*, but aſſured of a happy Life for the *future*, when he hath *conquered* the Difficulties he *contends* with.

VIII. Conſider that the *Difficulty* of theſe Duties is abundantly *compenſated* by the *Reward* of them. A generous Mind will think no *Means* too hard, which tend to noble and worthy *Ends*; in the Proſecution of which, *Oppoſition* only whets its *Courage* and *Reſolution*. So that doubtleſs had we any Spark of Generoſity in us, the Vaſtneſs and Excellency of the *End* we purſue, would make us deſpiſe all Difficulties in the *Way* to it. What a *Meanneſs* of *Spirit* therefore doth it argue in us to ſtand *boggling*, as we do, at the Difficulties of Religion; to think much of ſpending a few *Days* or *Years* in this World in *ſtriving* and *contending* with our Inclinations, in *Conſideration* and *Watchfulneſs*, in earneſt *Prayer* and ſevere *Reflections* on ourſelves, when we are aſſured before-hand, that at the *Concluſion* of this ſhort *Conflict* we ſhall be carried off by Angels in Triumph to Heaven, and there receive, from the Captain of our Salvation, a Crown of everlaſting Joys and Pleaſures; when, after a few *Moments* Pains and Labour, we ſhall live *Millions* of *Millions* of moſt happy Ages, in the raviſhing Fruition of a boundleſs Good, and after theſe are expired, have as many *Millions* of *Millions* more to live? What an unconſcionable Thing is it for us to complain of any *Difficulty*, who have ſuch a vaſt Recompence of Reward in our *View*? In the Name of God, Sirs, what would you have? Why, we would have Heaven drop down into our Mouths, and not put us to all this Trouble of *reaching* and *climbing* after it: Would you ſo? 'Tis a very *modeſt* Deſire indeed; that is, you would have the God of Heaven *thruſt* his Favours upon you, while you *ſcorn* and *deſpiſe* them, and proſtitute his Heaven to a Company of *Drones* that don't think it worth their while to go out of their Hives to gather it. O! for ſhame, look once more upon *Heaven*, and conſider again what it is to dwell in the Paradiſe of the World with God, and Angels, and Saints, and in their bleſſed Company to live out an Eternity in the moſt rapturous *Contemplations*, and *Loves*, and *Joys*;

Joys; to *bathe* our dilated Faculties in an over-flowing *River* of Pleasures, and in perfect *Ease*, *Health* and *Vigour* of Mind, to feed upon a Happiness that is as *large* as our Capacities, and as *lasting* as our Beings. Is this a Reward of that *inconsiderable* Nature, that we should think much to *labour* and *contend* for it; is not the Hope of being *satisfied for ever*, a sufficient Encouragement to induce us to *deny* our Lusts and Appetites a *few Moments*; or is there not *Good* enough in an everlasting *Rest*, to countervail a few Days and Years *Labour* and *Contention?* What tho' you *pant* and *labour* now while you are *climbing* the everlasting Hills, God be praised, 'tis not so far to the Top, but that the pleasant *Gales* and glorious *Prospects* you shall everlastingly enjoy there, will so abundantly *compensate* for the Difficulty of the *Ascent*, as that instead of *complaining* of it, you will, to eternal Ages, reflect upon it with *Pleasure* and *Delight.* Wherefore when your Courage begins to *shrink* at the Difficulty of your Warfare, do but lift up your Eyes to the Recompence of *Reward*; and to be sure, if you have any Heart, *that* will inspire you with such a brave Resolution, as nothing will be too hard for you, but what is absolutely *impossible.* For how can we be *disheartned* at any *superable* Difficulty, so long as we are *animated* with the Perswasion, that if we have our *Fruit unto Holiness, our End shall be Everlasting Life.*

SECT. V.

Concerning those Duties which appertain to the Perfection *and* Consummation *of our* Christian Warfare, *shewing* what *they are, and* how *effectually they conduce to the* perfecting *us in the Virtues of the* Heavenly Life.

I Proceed now to the Third and last Part of our *Christian Warfare, viz.* the *Consummation* of it; which is *final Perseverance:* For after we have *actually* engaged, and made some *Progress* in it, our next Care and Duty is, that we do not *relapse*, and basely *retreat* from what we have so *prosperously* undertaken, and hitherto so *effectually* prosecuted, but that so long as we live we *persist* in an open *Defiance* to our Sins, and endeavour to *pursue* and *mortify* our Inclinations to them, and *persevere* in the Practice of all Virtue; still endeavouring thereby to *improve* and *grow on* to Perfection, that so we may *die* as we have hitherto *lived*, and *consummate* our *Warfare* in a *final* Victory; and that when our Lord shall come or send his Herald, Death, to summon us off from the *Field*, we may be found *fighting* under his Banner against Sin, the World, and the Devil, and finally *die* as we have *lived*, his faithful *Soldiers* and *Followers.* For this he indispensably exacts of us, *viz. That we should be faithful unto Death*, Rev. ii. 10. *that we should patiently continue in well-doing*, Rom. ii. 7. *that we should endure to the End*, Mat. x. 22. *and hold the Beginning of our Confidence stedfast to the End*, Heb. iii. 14. *that we should keep his Works to the End*, and finally *overcome* as well as fight, Rev. ii. 26. In a Word, *that having set our Hands to the Plough, we should not look back*, Luke xvi. 26. but that *we should be always abounding in the Work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our Labour is not in vain in the Lord*, 1 Cor. xv. 58. The Sense of all which is, that we should not only *begin* this our *Christian Warfare*, and *prosecute* it for a *while*, but that we should *proceed* and *persevere* in it as long as we breathe, and never lay down our *Arms* till we lay down our *Lives.* In order to which, as we must still *persevere* in the Practice of those Duties which appertain to the *Course* and *Progress* of our *Warfare*, so there are sundry other Duties which we must practise, and which have a more *direct* and *immediate* Influence upon the final *Success* and *Consummation* of it. All which I shall reduce to the following Particulars:

1. That

1. That while we *stand*, we should not be *over-confident* of ourselves, but still keep a *jealous* Eye upon the *Weakness* and *Inconstancy* of our own Natures.

2. That if at any time we wilfully *fall* and *miscarry*, we should immediately *arise* again by Repentance.

3. That to *prevent* the like Falls and Miscarriages for the *future*, we should endeavour to *withdraw* our Affections from the Temptations of the World, but more especially from *those* which were the *Occasions* of our Fall.

4. That we should more *curiously* search into the *smaller* Defects and Indecencies of our Nature, in order to our *reforming* and *correcting* them.

5. That, so far as *lawfully* we can, we should live in a close *Communion* with the *Church*, whereof we are Members.

6. That we should not, out of a *fond* Opinion, that we are good *enough* already, *stint* our Progress in Religion, to any determinate *Degree* or *Measure* of Goodness.

7. That we should *frequently* entertain ourselves with the Prospect of our *Mortality*, and endeavour to *compose* ourselves before-hand into a good *Posture* of *Dying*.

8. That, in order thereunto, we would be wondrous *careful* to *discharge* our Consciences of all the *Relicks* and *Remains* of our past *Guilt*.

9. That to *compensate* for these, so far as we are able, we should take care to redeem the Time we have formerly spent in *sinful* Courses, by being *doubly* diligent in the Exercise of all the contrary *Virtues*, and the doing all the contrary *Good* we are able.

10. That we should labour after a *rational* and *well-grounded Assurance* of Heaven.

I. To the *Perfection* and *Consummation* of our *Christian Warfare*, it is necessary that while we *stand*, we should not be *over-confident* of ourselves, but still keep a *jealous* Eye upon the *Weakness* and *Inconstancy* of our own Natures. For thus the Apostle declares it to be the Will of God, that *we should not trust in ourselves*, i. e. *rely* too much upon our own *Strength* and *Ability*, 2 Cor. i. 9. and elsewhere he admonishes *let him that thinks he stands* (or, the *present* being put for the *future*, as it is very frequently, *let him that thinks he shall stand) take heed lest he fall*, 1 Cor. x. 12. so also, Rom. xi. 20. *Thou standest by Faith, be not high-minded, but fear*, i. e. it is thy *Faith* that *upholds* thee, but be not *too secure* of thy *Support*, lest thou also *fall* and *perish* as thy Brethren, the *Jews*, have done before thee. And hence we are bid *to work out our Salvation with fear and trembling*, Phil. ii. 12. *i. e.* with a Holy *Solicitude* and *Jealousy*, lest one time or other we should be *tempted* and *overcome*, and, at the last, finally *miscarry*. And, indeed, there is nothing doth more expose Men to the hazard of *falling*, than too much *Confidence* in their own Strength. This makes them venture upon a Thousand *Temptations* which they might have *fairly*, and much more *prudently* avoided; and hurries them hand over head into such inviting *Occasions* and *Opportunities* of sinning, as do too often *inveagle* and *betray* them, in despight of all their good Resolutions to the contrary. Whereas, had they but *suspected themselves*, and not *presumed* too much upon their own Stedfastness, they would many a time have kept out of *harm's-way*, and avoided the Snares that did *intangle* them; but by venturing, like *Sampson*, to lay down their Heads in a *Dalilah*'s Lap, in *Confidence* of the Strength of their own Resolution, they have been insensibly *inticed*, after some *coy* Refusals, to betray themselves into the Snare of the Devil.

And as, thro' an over-weaning *Confidence* of our own Strength, we *expose* ourselves to many needless Temptations, so we do also, too often, provoke God to *withdraw* his Grace and Assistance from us, and to leave us to contend *alone* with those Temptations whereunto we do so *confidently* expose

 ourselves.

ourselves. For as he is always ready to *assist* us, so he always expects that we should acknowledge our *Need* of, and *Dependence* upon him, and not presume too much upon our *own* Strength, which, without his gracious *Concurrence*, is *Weakness* and *Impotence*. When therefore without God's *Call* and *Warrant* we will needs *rush* into Temptations, in Confidence of our own *Ability* to resist and conquer them, he many Times leaves us without his *Aid* and *Assistance*, that so he may chastise our *Presumption*, by permitting us to be *defeated*, and convince us by the woful Experiment of our *Fall*, how *unable* we are to stand without his Aid and Support. It is our daily Prayer that God would *not lead us into Temptation*; but if for our Trial he thinks meet to do so, we have all Assurance, that if we be not wanting to our selves, *He will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will with the Temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it*, 1 Cor. x. 13. But if we will lead *ourselves* into Temptation, in Confidence of our own Ability to *contend* with, and *break* thro' it, God is so far from being obliged to *second* us in our *Folly* and unwarrantable *Rashness*, that he is justly *provoked* by it to *abandon* us to ourselves, and, as a certain Consequence of that, to permit us to be *vanquish'd* and *led captive*. Wherefore as we hope to persevere to the *End*, and to bring our Warfare to a happy *Conclusion*; it is highly necessary, that we should always keep a *jealous* Eye upon ourselves, and not *confide* too much in our own Strength and Ability.

II. To our *final* Perseverance in the *Christian Warfare*, it is also necessary, that if at any time we wilfully *fall* and *miscarry* in it, we should *immediately arise* again by Repentance. For what is forbidden us as to *one* Sin, equally extends to *all*, *let not the Sun go down upon your wrath*, Eph. iv. 26. that is, if you have *wilfully* given the Reins to your Wrath, suffer it not to break forth into *contumelious Behaviour*, but repent of it *immediately*, before the Sun sets; according to that old Practice of the *Pythagoreans*, mentioned by *Plutarch*, who when at any Time they fell into *reproachful* Language out of Anger, Τὰς δεξίας ἐμβάλλοντες ἀλλήλοις καὶ ἀσπαζόμενοι πρὶν ἢ τὸν ἥλιον δῦναι διαλύοντο, *i. e.* before ever the Sun set they always took care to be *reconciled*, and constantly *shook Hands* with, and *embraced* one another; and the reason of the Prohibition, which you have in the next Verse, *viz. neither give place to the Devil*, that is, by suffering your *Wrath* to grow into inveterate *Malice*, equally extends to all *other* Sins, which if they be not *immediately rooted* out by Repentance, will quickly *improve* into Habits. So that we have as much reason to repent of our *Lust* before the Sun rises on it, and of our *Fraud* and *Oppression* before it hath *run its course* on it, as of our *Wrath* before it *goes down* upon it. And consequently, by a parity of Reason, the Prohibition must extend to all *other* Sins as well as *this*, and oblige us, whenever we have *wilfully* sinn'd in any Particular, to *revoke* and *expiate* it by an *immediate* Act of Repentance.

For he that hath *sinn'd* wilfully and not *repented* of it, doth all the while continue an obstinate *Rebel* against God, and is so far from *persevering* in the *Christian Warfare*, that he is actually listed a *Voluntier* in the *adverse* Party. And if after we have *thus* sinn'd, Death should *interpose* between us and our Repentance, (as who knows but it may if we repent not *immediately*) we shall be so far from *consummating* our *Christian Warfare* in *Victory*, that we shall die *Vassals* to the Devil. But then, as by sinning *wilfully* we do *desert* God, so by continuing *impenitent* under it we still run *farther* and *farther* from him, and thereby make so *wide* a Gap and Interruption in our Religious Progress, as will not be easily *repaired* again; and whereas had we *repented* and *come back* without *Delay* as soon as we had *strayed* from our Duty, we might have soon *recovered* the Ground we had lost by it, and by a little more Diligence have gotten as far *onward* as if we had never interrupted our Pro-

grefs at all; by *deferring* our Repentance we fet ourfelves farther and farther *back*, and fhall every Day be more and more *indifpofed* to return. For in the courfe of our Religion there is no *ftanding ftill*, but either we are *progreffive* or *retrogade*, going *backward* or *forward* as long as we live; fo that when once we are *out* of our Way, we are ftill going *farther* out, till fuch time as we *return* again; and confequently the *longer* we are out, the harder 'twill be to return, and the *farther* we fhall have to the end of our Way. For when I firft fin, and the Wound of my Innocence is yet *green* and *frefh*, it may eafily be cured by the timely Application of a forrowful *Confeffion* and new *Refolution* of Amendment; but if I neglect it, 'twill *rot* and *putrify*; my *Senfe* of it will be *hardned*, and my *Inclination* to it grow every Day more *inveterate*, and then if it be not *lanc'd* and *corroded* by a *fharp*, a *long*, and a *painful* Repentance, it will turn into an incurable *Gangrene*. Hence the Apoftle bids us *exhort one another daily, while it is called to Day*, that is, to *repent* while it is called to Day, *left any of us be hardened thro' the deceitfulnefs of fin*, Heb. iii. 13. So that when we have *wilfully* finn'd, we run a mighty Hazard of our *final* Perfeverance, if we don't repent *immediately*. For all the while we *delay*, our Confcience grows more *feared*, and our Luft grows more *confirmed*, and God knows where it will end; but 'tis fearfully to be *fufpected* that *that* neglected Bruife which we got by our Fall will grow *worfe* and *worfe*, and determine at laft in final *Impenitency*. Wherefore as we intend to *perfevere* in well-doing, it concerns us in the *firft* place to take all poffible Care not to give way to any *wilful* Sin, nor fuffer ourfelves by any Hopes or Fears to be tempted from our good *Refolution*; but if at any Time our wicked Inclinations fhould prevail againft it, to betake ourfelves *immediately* to a ferious Repentance, to make a forrowful *Confeffion* of it to our offended God, and folemnly renew our *Refolution* againft it, that fo we may ftop the growing evil *betimes*, before it's capable of endangering our *final* Apoftafy.

III. To our final *Perfeverance*, it's neceffary that to *prevent* the like Falls and Mifcarriages for the *future*, we fhould endeavour to *withdraw* our Affections from the Temptations of the World, but more efpecially from *thofe* Temptations which were the *Occafions* of our Fall. For thus we are ftrictly prohibited *to fet our Affections upon Things on the Earth*, Col. iii. 21. *to love the World, and the Things that are in the World*, 1 John ii. 15. *to lay up for our felves Treafures upon Earth*, Mat. vi. 19. and it is the proper Character of a true Chriftian *to be crucified to the World*, Gal. iv. 14. and to converfe *as a Stranger and a Pilgrim in it*, Heb. xi. 13. As on the contrary, *to mind earthly Things, and to be lovers of Pleafures more than lovers of God*, are made the proper Characters of Infidels and Apoftates, *Phil.* iii. 19. compared with 2 *Tim.* ii. 4. And fo inconfiftent is an inordinate Affection to the World, with our *Perfeverance* in the Chriftian Warfare, that St. *James* expresfly tells us, *That the Friendfhip of the World is Enmity with God*, Jam. iv. 4. and 'tis to the Excefs of our Friendfhip to it that the Scripture frequently attributes our Apoftafy, 2 *Tim.* iv. 10. And the Apoftle tells us, *That they that will be rich*, that is, immoderately covet to be fo, *fall into Temptation and a Snare, and into many foolifh and hurtful Lufts, which drown Men in Perdition and Deftruction; and that the love of Money is the root of all Evil*, 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. From all which it's apparent, how neceffary it is, in the Accounts of Chriftianity, in order to our *Perfeverance*, that we fhould endeavour to *wean* and *abftract* ourfelves from the World.

For this World is the *Magazine* of all thofe Temptations by which our Virtue and Innocence is *importuned* and *affaulted*; and 'tis either the *Hope* of fome worldly *Pleafure, Profit*, or *Honour* that *allures*, or the *Fear* of fome of the contrary Evils which are incident to us in the Courfe of Religion that *affrights* us from our Duty. Whilft therefore we *immoderately* love thofe *Goods* and

and *Evils* which are the *Solicitors* of Vice, we are in very great danger of being *conquered* and *led captive* by it. For 'tis not for the sake of *sinning* that Men sin, but for the sake of those *Goods*, or to avoid those *Evils* which are appendent to their *sinning* or *not sinning*; and consequently, the more a Man *loves* those *Goods* which cling and adhere to a sinful Action, the more propense he will be to the Commission of it; and the more he *dreads* those *Evils* which he can most easily avoid by a sinful Action, the more prone and inclinable he will be to it. Wherefore to secure our *perseverance* in this Warfare against Sin, it is absolutely necessary that we *rectify* our *Opinion* of the *Goods* and *Evils* of this World, and *moderate* and *abate* our *Affection* towards them, especially towards *those* that have been most *prevalent* with us. For the Temptation that prevails upon us *discovers* the *weak* side of our Nature, and *instructs* the Devil what *Good* or *Evil* it is that is most apt to *allure* or *affright* us; and to be sure that *subtle* Tempter, who hath been so many Thousand Years *studying* the Arts of *seducing* us, will not fail to assault us *again* where he hath been already *successful*; and therefore it concerns us to *fortify* ourselves there, where we have so much reason to expect the Enemy will *assault* us, and to *rectify* our *Opinions* of, and *mortify* our Affections to those Things which have already so much *imposed* upon our Virtue and Innocence. For 'tis our *Imagination* that gives *Life* and *Efficacy* to the *Charms* and *Terrors* of the World, and renders them so successful against us; we *fansy* that to be in them which is not, and so are *affected*, not so much with the Things *themselves*, as with the false *Representations* we make of them.

For it's plain the *Goods* of the World are beholden to *ourselves*, for the greatest part of those *Beauties* with which they *tempt* and *allure* us; and 'tis our *Fancy* that gives the *Paint* and *Fucus* with which they *charm* and *inamour* our Affections; and so for the *Evils* of the World, 'tis our own *Imagination* that *disguises* them into such *Bugs* and *Scare-crows*, and puts those ghastly *Vizors* on them with which they *fright* and *amaze* us. If therefore we would but take care to *rectify* our *Opinions* of them both, and to strip them out of their *imaginary* Terrors and Allurements, we should thereby *disarm* them of their main Strength, and render them much less able to seduce us for the *future*. And this, methinks, we might easily do, if we would but fairly represent to ourselves the present *State* and *Posture* of our Affairs. For we are a sort of Beings, that are every Moment travelling from *hence* to an *eternal* World, where an *unexpressible* Happiness or Misery attends us; and all that we *enjoy* or *suffer* in this Life, is only the *Convenience* or *Inconvenience* of a *short* Journey to a *long* Home, but can have no other Influence upon our *everlasting* Condition, than as it is the Occasion either of our *Virtue* or *Vice*, which are the only *Goods* and *Evils* that will accompany us to Eternity, and make us *happy* or *miserable* there for ever. But as for *Poverty* or *Riches*, *Pain* or *Pleasure*, *Disgrace* or *Reputation*, they are Things which probably within these Ten or Twenty Years, will be as perfectly *indifferent* to us as our last Night's *Dream* was when we awoke in the Morning. And this, methinks, duly *considered*, were enough to render us very *unconcerned* at any *Good* or *Evil* that can happen to us here. For what a mighty Matter is it whether I fare *well* or *ill* for Twenty or Thirty Years, who when that is expired must be *happy* or *miserable* for Millions of Millions of Ages; and what will these *little* Goods or Evils signify to me, when my *Body* is in the Grave, and my *Soul* in Eternity? When I am *strip'd* into a naked Spirit, and set *ashore* upon the invisible World, then all these Things will *be* as if they never were, and in the twinkling of an Eye I shall *lose* Sight of them for ever; and of all that I *enjoyed* or *suffered* in this Life, I shall have nothing remaining but my *Virtue* or *Vice*, whose Issues will prove my eternal *Happiness* or *Misery*. Doubtless, would we but accustom our Minds to such Reflections as these, they would

effectually *restrain* us from the immoderate *Love* or *Fear* of the Things of this World, and reduce us to a *constant* and *efficacious* Persuasion, that there is no *Good* in this World *comparable* to that of doing our *Duty*, nor any *Evil* incident to us in this Life, that is not infinitely less *formidable* than *Sin*. And when once our *Affection* to this World, and our *Opinion* of the *Goods* and *Evils* of it, are thus *moderated* and *rectified*; the Temptations to Sin will quite *lose* their *hold* of us, and be no more able to *fasten* upon our Resolution. So that now we may pass safely thro' them whilst they are *sparkling* about us, there being no *Tinder* in our Breasts for them to *catch fire* and *kindle* upon. Now they will be no longer capable to *allure* or *affright us*, those bosom Orators being *silenced* that were wont to *contend* for them, and to *magnify* their *Charms* and *Terrors*; and when we neither immoderately *love* nor *fear* them, 'twill be no hard matter to *defend* our Virtue and Innocence against all their *Assaults* and *Importunities*.

IV. To our *final* Perseverance, it is necessary that we should more *curiously* search into the *smaller* Defects and Indecencies of our Nature, in order to our *reforming* and *correcting* them. Hence we are commanded *to hate even the Garments spotted by the flesh*, Jude 23. *i. e.* to take care of the *Beginnings* of Sin, of any thing that hath the least *Spot* or *Infection* of it; and accordingly we are obliged not only to take care to *rub out* the greater *Stains* of our Nature, but *to be diligent that we may be found of our Lord in peace without spot and blameless*, 2 Pet. iii. 14. *i. e.* to endeavour to reform those *smaller* and more *indiscernable* Defects of our Nature, which tho they do not totally *stain*, yet very much *spot* and *blemish* it; that so at the coming of our Lord we may be found not only *sincere* and *upright*, but, as near as may be, *innocent* and *blameless*, For so *Phil.* ii. 15. we are bid to *be blameless, harmless, and without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Generation*, *i. e.* to endeavour so to demean ourselves in this World, as that we may appear, not only honest *for the main*, but, so near as is possible, *spotless* and *unreprovable*. And, indeed, there is nothing doth more frequently occasion Mens *final* Miscarriage in Religion, than their not being *careful* and *diligent* in this matter. When they first enter into the Christian Warfare, they very industriously set themselves against that Course of wilful Sin in which they formerly lived; and this were wondrous well, if they did not stop here, and go no *farther*; but, alas! in the mean Time, while they are thus industriously busied in subduing their *old* Sins, there are a great many lesser *Flaws* and *Defects* in their Nature, which by a timely Care and Inspection, they might easily correct? but these they take no notice of, but quietly permit them to *grow* and *increase*, till at last they become as *hurtful* and dangerous to them as their old Sins were, against which they have all this while so zealously contended. As, for Instance, when they first entered upon a Resolution of Amendment, they were *profane*, it may be, or *sensual*, or vehemently addicted to *Fraud* and *Oppression*; and against these they opposed themselves with great *Zeal* and *Animosity*; and so far they did *well*; but in the mean Time, perhaps there was *Pride* and *Ostentation*, *Envy* and *Peevishness*, *Self-will* and *Censoriousness*, secretly *budding* and *sprouting* up in their Natures, all which they might have easily cured by *timely* Applications; but, alas! in the heat of their Contest, against their *other* Sins, they never so much as minded or regarded *these*, but e'en let them alone till they *grew* up into obstinate and inveterate Habits, and became every whit as *fatal* and *destructive* to their Souls, as *those* were which they have been all this while *subduing* and *mortifying*. So that, after all, they have only *changed* their Sins, and have been *conjuring up* one Devil while they have been *laying* another; and whilst the Tide of their Wickedness hath been *ebbing* on this Shore, it hath been *flowing* on the contrary, and as it hath *sunk* in *Sensuality*, it hath *swelled* into Devilishness. Perhaps whilst you are zealously carrying on your

Warfare againſt your old Sins, you may find yourſelves too apt to be *tickled* with Applauſe, and *puffed* with vain Oſtentation; have a Care now, that while you are *ſtarving* one Vice, you do not *pamper* another. For if you do not correct this *little* Irregularity of your Nature *betimes*, 'twill ſoon be as *dangerous* and *miſchievous* to you, as ever any of thoſe Vices were, againſt which you are contending; 'twill by degrees, ſo *inſinuate* into your good Intentions, and ſo *ſophiſticate* the Purity of them, that at laſt you will *intend* nothing elſe but *Applauſe*; and ſo your whole Religion will be converted into dead *Shew* and empty *Pageantry*, and your Spiritual Warfare will prove only a paſſage out of *Profaneneſs* into *Hypocriſy*. It may be, whilſt you are contending againſt thoſe *fleſhly* Inclinations, by which you have formerly been captivated, your Hearts will begin to *ſwell* with an *over-weaning* Conceit of your own Virtue and Godlineſs; and as a Conſequence of that, to entertain *contemptuous* and *cenſorious* Thoughts of your Brethren; beware now, that whilſt you are *ſtruggling* with your old fleſhly Luſts, you do not *overlook* theſe little *Defects* and *Indecencies* of your Nature; leſt while you are conquering *one* ſort of Sins, you be captivated by *another*. For if you do not take care to *nip* them in their *Buds*, and to *check* theſe little *Eſſays* and *Beginnings* of them, they will ſoon *ſpring up* into Habits of *Pride* and *Inſolence*, *Rancour* and *Uncharitableneſs*, and ſo your Warfare againſt Sin will be only a *Tranſition* from *one* Evil into *another*, from the Pollutions of the *Fleſh* into the Pollutions of the *Spirit*, and from the Nature of *Beaſts* into the Nature of *Devils*. Wherefore, if you would be *finally* ſucceſsful in the Chriſtian Warfare, you muſt take great care, that while you are contending with the *groſſer* and *more inveterate* Vices of your Nature, you do not neglect its *leſſer* Defects and Irregularities; for whilſt they are *leſſer* they may be *eaſily* corrected, but if they are not, they will ſoon grow *greater*, and, in the end, prove as *dangerous* as thoſe you are now contending with. For every Vice is *ſmall* in the Beginning, and eaſy to be cured, but if it be *neglected*, like a ſcratch in the Fleſh, it will *corrupt* and *rankle* into a ſpreading *Gangrene*.

V. To our *Perſeverance* to the End in this our Chriſtian Warfare, it is alſo neceſſary, that, ſo far as *lawfully* we can, we ſhould live in cloſe *Communion* with the *Church*, whereof we are Members. 'Tis true, a particular Church may be ſo *corrupted*, as that its Members may be obliged to *diſ-unite* themſelves from it. For every Man is obliged by Virtue of his being in *any* Society, not to agree to any thing which tends to the apparent *Ruin* of it. Now the main End of *Chriſtian* Society being the *Honour* of *God*, and the *Salvation* of *Souls*, every Man that enters into it is thereby obliged in his own Station to *advance* this End; and conſequently, as to *join* in all Acts of the Chriſtian Society he is *united* to, ſo far as they tend thereunto, ſo to *refuſe* all ſuch Acts of that Society, if any *ſuch* ſhould be injoined, as do apparently *oppoſe*, and are directly *repugnant* to it. So that if any Act that is apparently *ſinful*, be injoined by the particular Church, whereof I am a Member, as a neceſſary Condition of my *Communion* with her, I am bound to *abſtain* from it, for the ſake of the *general* End of Chriſtian Society. As, for Inſtance, ſuppoſe the *Church*, whereof I am a *Member*, require it as a Condition of my Communion, that I ſhould tranſgreſs any *juſt* Law of the *Commonwealth*, whereof I am a *Subject*; in this Caſe I am bound rather to *deſert* that Church's Communion, than live in wilful *Diſobedience* to the Civil Authority. And this is the Caſe of thoſe Men, who, tho they live in a Chriſtian Commonwealth, have been *Baptized* into, and *bred up* in the Communion of *particular* Congregations, that, contrary to Law, have *ſeparated* themſelves from the *Eſtabliſh'd*, *National* Church; for if in this *National* Church there be nothing impoſed on them, by the Laws of the *Commonwealth*, that is apparently contradictory to the Laws of *Chriſt*, they are bound

in Conscience to *desert* those *separate* Congregations (allowing them to be *true* Churches) and to *join* themselves with the Church *National*; and if they do not, they are wilful Offenders against the Law of Christ, which requires us to obey all human Ordinances *for the Lord's sake.* And again, supposing *one* National Church to be subject to *another*, that which is *subject* is bound to refuse the Communion of that which is *superior*, if it cannot enjoy it without complying with Impositions that are apparently *sinful.* Which is evidently the Case between *us* and the *Church of Rome*, supposing that *de jure* we were once her *Subjects* and *Members*; for had we been so, we should doubtless never have *separated* ourselves from her, could we but have *separated* her *Sins* from her Communion; could we have profest her *Creed* without *implicitly* believing all her Cheats and Impostures, or submitted ourselves to her *Guides* without apparent Danger of being *misled* by them into the Pit of Destruction, or join'd with her publick *Services* without *worshipping* of *Creatures*, or received her *Sacraments*, without practising the grossest *Superstitions* and *Idolatries.* But when she had made it necessary for us either to *sin with*, or *separate from* her, we could have no other *honest* Remedy but only to *withdraw*; and if in this our *Separation* there had been a sinful *Schism* on either side, we could have appealed to Heaven and Earth, *whose* the Guilt of it was; *theirs* that forced us upon it, or *ours* that were forced to it. But yet the Case of *our* Separation from the *Church of Rome*, is vastly different from that of the Separation of *private* Members from their own *particular* Churches. For we affirm that the *Church of Rome* is but a *particular* Church, whose *Authority* extends no farther than to its own *native* Members, and consequently hath no more Power to impose Laws of Communion upon *us*, than *we* have upon *her*; our particular Church being altogether as *distinct* and *independent* from *her*, as *she* is from *ours*. So that tho the Terms of Communion she imposes upon her own Members, were all of them *lawful* and *innocent*, yet do they no more *oblige* us as we are *Christians* of the *Church of England*, than the *lawful* Commands of the *Great Mogul* do, as we are *Subjects* of the *Kingdom of England.*

But the Case of *private* Members, whether of *ours*, or any *other* particular Church, is vastly different. For if we will allow *particular* Churches to be so many *formed Societies* of Christians; (as we must do, or else degrade them into so many *confused Multitudes)* we must necessarily allow them to have a just *Authority* (even as all other formed Societies have) over their own Members. And that they have so, is evident, not only from the Nature of the thing, but also from *Scripture*, where the *Bishops* and *Pastors* of particular Churches are said to be constituted by the Holy Ghost *Overseers* of their particular Flocks, *Acts* xx. 28. which word, both in *sacred* and *profane* Writ, denotes a *ruling* Power. And accordingly these Overseers are elsewhere called *Ruling-Elders*, 1 Tim. v. 17. and the Subjects and Members of their Churches are required *to obey them, as those that have the rule over them*, Heb. xiii. 17. and elsewhere the Apostle exhorts them to *know*, i. e. *submissively to own* the Authority of those that were *over them in the Lord*, 1 Thes. v. 12. By all which it's evident, that the Members of *particular* Churches are by *divine Institution* subjected to the *Authority* of their *Spiritual Governors*, and obliged in *all Things* to *obey them*, wherein they are not *countermanded* by Christ himself. So that tho *one* particular Church may *refuse* the Impositions of *another*, and that not only as they are *sinful*, but as they are *Impositions*, because the other hath no *lawful Authority* over it; yet it is by no means *lawful* for the Subjects of any *particular* Church to *disobey* their Church-Governors in any *lawful* Matter; because being *subjected* to their *Authority* by Christ the Supreme Head of the *Church-Catholick*, they are obliged to submit to them as to his *Substitutes* and *Vicegerents* in every thing which he hath not *antecedently* prohibited. And if rather than do so, they shall choose to

revolt

revolt from the Communion of their Church, they are *Schismaticks*, or, which is the same thing, they are *Rebels* to Christ's Authority in that particular Church they revolt from. For what *Faction* is in the *State*, that is *Schism* in the *Church*, *viz.* an *unjust* Opposition to Authority; the one to Christ's *Civil* Authority derived upon our *Magistrates*, the other to his *spiritual* Authority derived upon our *Bishops* and *Ecclesiastical* Governors.

'Tis true, in some Cases, as I hinted before, *withdrawing* from the Communion of a Church may be so far from being a *Rebellion* against Christ, that it may be an Act of *Duty* and *Obedience* to him; for where Christ, who is my *supreme* Lord, and my *Ecclesiastical* Governors who are in Authority *under him*, command Things that are directly *inconsistent*, I am, doubtless, bound to obey *him* rather than them; yea tho their Commands are not inconsistent in *themselves*, yet if I am *fully persuaded* they are, it is all one to *me*. For when I do what I *falsly* believe Christ hath *forbidden*, I am in *Will* as much a *Rebel* against his Authority, as when I do what I *truly* believe he hath forbidden. And so, by *not complying* with my Spiritual Governors out of an *innocent Mis-persuasion*, that what they command is *unlawful*, I do *formally*, and in *Will* as much *obey* Christ in so doing, at if it were *really* unlawful. So that, in short, when the Governours of the Church, whereof I am a Member, do impose as the Conditions of my Communion, Things that are either unlawful *in themselves*, or that, after *due Examination*, I verily *believe* are unlawful, I am bound in Obedience to the Authority of Christ, rather to *desert* that Communion, than to *comply* with the Terms and Conditions of it.

But since to *desert* the Communion of a Church, is a matter of *vast* Moment, (as I shall prove by and by) it ought not to be done without the greatest *Caution* and *Tenderness*. For he that rejects *sinful Terms* of *Communion* without *just* Enquiry and *sufficient* Examination, is *formally* as much a *Schismatick*, i. e. he is as much a Rebel in *Will*, to Christ's Spiritual Authority in his Church *Delegates* and *Vicegerents*, as he that *rashly* rejects *innocent* and *lawful ones*. For had it been only the *Sinfulness* of the Condition that displeased him, he would have made Conscience before he presumed to reject it, *duly* to inform himself whether it were *sinful* or *no*; but by thus rejecting it *at a venture*, without a *due* Enquiry into the nature of it, he plainly shews that 'twas not so much the *Sin* that displeased him, as the *Authority* that imposed it; and that 'twas not his *Conscience* that took offence at it, but his *Humour*; and consequently, that he would have had the same *Dislike* of it, tho it had been *lawful* and *innocent*. For *Conscience* being an Act of the *Judgment* and *Reason*, cannot be offended without *Reason*, either *real* or *apparent*; and without making a *due* Enquiry into the Nature of the thing we are offended at, we can have no *Reason* that will either *warrant* or *excuse* our Offence.

Now to a *due* Enquiry, it is necessary that we should *impartially* examine *both sides* of the Question; and that while we are doing so, we should keep *both* our Ears open to the Matter in Debate, and *equally* attend to what can be said *for*, as well as to what can be said *against* it; and then that upon a full hearing of *both* we should determine, as near as we can, on which side the *Truth* lies, without *Favour* or *Affection*. For he that enquires only what can be said *against* the Matter he is offended at, doth thereby give a plain Indication that he is resolved to be offended at it *right or wrong*; and that the End of his Enquiry is not so much to *satisfy* his *Conscience*, as to *fortify* his unreasonable *Prejudice*. Wherefore before we do *reject* the Conditions of our Church's Communion as *sinful*, we are obliged, under the Penalty of *wilful Schism*, impartially to enquire what is to be said *for* as well as *against* them; and for this End to *apply* ourselves to our Spiritual Governors and Pastors, and propose our *Doubts* to them, and attend to their *Resolutions*

with

with an *honest*, *teachable* Mind, that is willing to be informed; and where we are *capable* of judging, faithfully to peruse those *Books* and *Arguments* that make for the *one* side as well as the *other*. For unless we do thus, it's plain that we are *biassed* by a factious Inclination, and that we have a *great Mind* to separate from the Church's Communion. For if we were not *prejudiced* against her Authority, by a *Schismatical* Temper of Mind, we should be as forward at least to consult what *may* be said *for* her Impositions, as what *is* said *against* them.

But then if the Matters she imposes are such as a *plain* and *illiterate* Communicant cannot *judge of*, nor *comprehend* the Force of the Reasons that make for, or against them, *such* Persons *in such* Cases are obliged humbly to *acquiesce* in the Church's Authority, and not *blindly* to separate from her they *know not why*. As for Instance, suppose the Matter imposed should be such a *Form* of Government, or such *Modes* of Discipline, or *Rites* and *Circumstances* of Divine Worship, as carry no such *apparent* Evil in them, or *express* Contradiction to any Command of our Saviour, as to enable an *illiterate* Christian rationally to pronounce them *unlawful*; and whether they be *unlawful* or no, is not to be determined perhaps without some Skill in the *Original* Languages, and the *critical* Acceptations of Phrases, or insight into *Ecclesiastical History*, or *Metaphysical* Niceties and Speculations: and 'tis by some of *these* that most of the Controversies between *us* and our *dissenting Brethren*, are to be *judged* and *decided*. Now in such Matters as these, where he cannot judge for *himself*, what should an *unlearned* Communicant do? Why, this he knows well enough, that 'tis his Duty in all *lawful* Things to submit to the Governors of his Church, and *reverence* Christ's Authority in them; but whether the above-named Matters they impose be *lawful* or *no*, he neither *doth* nor *can* know. So that if upon the score of those Impositions, he *rejects* the Church's Communion, he rejects it he *knows not why*; and to avoid doing that which he doth *not know* is a *Sin*, he *refuses* to do that which he *knows* is a Duty: So that whether that which the Church imposes be lawful or no, 'tis apparent *Rebellion* in him to *refuse* it; because for all that he knows it is *lawful*, and tho it should be *unlawful*, yet that cannot be the Motive of *his* Non-compliance with it, who doth not *understand* the Reasons that make it so. He therefore that *separates* from the Communion of the Church, for Causes that he cannot *judge of*, must necessarily separate without Cause or Reason; he can have neither *true* nor false Pretence for his *Separation*; because the Arguments *pro* and *con* are beyond the Sphere of his Cognizance; and consequently, if he thereupon *withdraw* from the Church's Communion, 'tis not because he *cannot* comply with her *sinful* Impositions, but because *he will not* submit to her *just* Authority. Whereas by modestly submitting *our* Judgment to the *Church's*, in Cases where we cannot judge for *ourselves*, we take an effectual Course to secure our Innocence. For tho that which the Church injoins us should be *materially* sinful, yet to us who neither *do* nor *can* understand it to be so, it will be imputed only as an *innocent* Error, because by following the *Church's* Reason where our *own cannot* guide us, we take the best Course we can *not to be* mistaken; and if we *should* be mistaken, we have this to *excuse* us, that 'twas by following an Authority which God Himself hath set over us; whereas if we are mistaken on the *other side*, we are left altogether *inexcusable*.

But then there may be other Conditions of Church-Communion, of whose *unlawfulness* a Communicant may be very *doubtful*, tho he be not *confidently persuaded of it*; and what is to be done in this Case? To which I answer; First, that 'tis doubtless our duty not *rashly* to determine any thing to be *false* or *unlawful* which our Spiritual Governors have determined to be *true* or *lawful*. For we are bound by the Law of Christian *Modesty* to conclude, that they having a *larger* Prospect of Things than we, and *greater*

 Advantages

Advantages of inquiring into them, are far more *capable* Judges of what is true and lawful; and consequently, tho we may possibly have some *little* Probability that their *Opinion* is false, or their *Command* unlawful, yet we ought not to *determine* it so, unless it be in such *plain* and *evident* Cases, as do not only out-weigh the *Probability* of their Opinions, but the *Authority* of them too. Wherefore in Cases of a *doubtful* Nature, 'tis both *modest* and *safe* to subscribe to the Judgment of our Superiors; because in so doing, we have not only our own *Ignorance* to *excuse*, but their *Authority* to *warrant* us; and if we should happen to be in the *Wrong*, thro' our *Modesty* and *Humility*, 'twill be safer for us, than to be in the *Right* thro' our *Pride* and *Self-conceit*. But perhaps the *Probability* of our side may be so *great*, or at least *seem so* to us, that notwithstanding we give all *due* Respect and Deference to her Authority, we cannot forbear *doubting* of the Lawfulness of her Conditions of Communion. If so, then, Secondly, 'tis to be considered, that 'tis as much our Duty to *obey* her Commands in Things that are *lawful*, as *not* to obey them in Things that are *unlawful*; and therefore if we only *doubt* whether her Commands be lawful or no, our Doubt ought to make us as fearful of *disobeying* as it doth of *obeying* them, because the Danger of sinning is on both sides *equal*. And therefore in this Case, wherein I am necessitated to determine myself *one* way or *t'other*, it is, doubtless, my Duty, to determine on that side which makes most for the Church's *Security* and *Peace*, which, next to the Honour of God, and the Salvation of Souls, ought to be preferred above all Things; and which consequently, if it be of any *Weight* with me, must necessarily *turn* the Scale of my Choice, when it is before in *Æquilibrio*; and whether to *obey* or *disobey*, be most for the Church's *Peace*, is very easy to be determined.

The Sum of all therefore is this, That 'tis our Duty to continue in strict *Obedience* to, and *Communion* with, that *Particular* Church whereof we are Members, so long as it injoins us nothing that is *plainly* and *apparently sinful*; that if either we cannot judge of the *Sinfulness* or *Lawfulness* of her Conditions of Communion, or do only *doubt* of their *Lawfulness*, we are obliged to submit to her Judgment and Authority, and not to *separate* from her, till upon an impartial Enquiry into the Reasons of both sides, we are *fully convinced* that they are *sinful*.

Now that this is an indispensable Duty of our Religion, is evident, not only from the above-named Scriptures, by which the *Bishops* of particular Churches are constituted the *Overseers* and *Governors* of them, and the Subjects and Members of those Churches are required to yield them *Obedience*; but also from those Texts which forbid *Divisions* in the *particular* Churches, such as 1 *Cor.* i. 10. *I beseech you, by the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that there be no Divisions among you*; and which bid us *mark them that cause Divisions among us, and avoid them*, Rom. xvi. 17. and also which declare *Schisms and Divisions* to be Fruits of the *Flesh*, as particularly, 1 *Cor.* iii. 3. and St. *Jude* 19. and in a Word, which require us *to endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*, Eph. iv. 3. *to be of one Mind*, 2 Cor. xiii. 11. and to *stand fast in one Spirit, with one* Mind, *Phil.* i. 27. all which was spoke to Christians, as they were Members of *particular Churches*, to oblige them by no means to *dissent* and *separate* from those Churches, unless they were forced to it by *just* and *manifest* Reasons, and methinks 'tis a most *pathetical* Conjuration of the Apostle, *If there be any Consolation in Christ, if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowship of the Spirit, if any Bowels and Mercies; fulfil ye my Joy, that ye be like-minded, being of one accord, and of one Mind*, Phil. ii. 1, 2. which Exhortation he gives them, as they were a *particular Corporation* of *Christians* under *Epaphroditus*, their *Head* and *Bishop*, by whom he sent this Epistle to them. The Sense of all which is, to oblige us not to *disunite* ourselves from the Church, of which we are Members, so long as we are permitted to continue in her

Communion,

Communion, without doing any thing that is *apparently unlawful*. Or if we ſuppoſe thoſe *Diviſions* which the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, and forbids, to be meant of *Factions* within the Church, without actual *Separation*, then much more is *Separation*, which is the *higheſt* Faction and Breach of Unity, to be lookt upon as *wicked* and *unlawful*. So that for Men to *ſeparate* from the Church's Communion upon little *Piques*, uncertain *Scruples*, and blind *Prejudices*, is a very *great* and *dangerous* Sin againſt the Goſpel; 'tis a manifeſt *Violation* of the Laws of *Union*, and an open *Rebellion* againſt Chriſt's Authority in his Church. And being ſo, it is no wonder, that in the *pureſt* Ages of Chriſtianity, 'twas *branded* with ſuch an *infamous* Character: For thus in the 31 Canon of the Apoſtles, 'tis called *Ambition* and *Tyranny*, and condemn'd by *Ignatius*, the Diſciple of St. *John*, as the Ἀρχὴ κακῶν, or Original of Evils, *Ep. ad Smyrn.* as a Sin that ſhuts Men out of the Kingdom of Heaven, *Ep. ad Philad.* and by the *African Code* 'tis ſtiled a *deſtructive*, *ſacrilegious* Sin, *Con. Carth.* &c. *Can.* 100. and St. *Cyprian* makes it to be more *Heinous* than the Sin of the *Lapſi*, that offered Sacrifice to Idols to *avoid* Perſecution, and to be ſuch a Sin, as *Martyrdom* itſelf would not *expiate*, *de Unit. Eccleſ.* and *Dionyſius Alexandrinus* affirms, That to ſuffer *Martyrdom*, rather than make a *Schiſm* in the Church, is as glorious an Act to die refuſing to offer Sacrifice to Idols, *Euſeb. Eccl. Hiſt. lib.* 6. And as they thus *decry* Schiſm, ſo on the contrary they *extol* Union, as the *Nurſe* of *Piety*, the *Fence* of *Religion*, the *Quinteſſence* and *Extract* of all *Chriſtian Virtue*.

And indeed, 'tis to the *Unity* of the Members of the Church among themſelves, that the Scripture attributes their *Growth* and *Improvement* in Piety and Virtue: For thus the Apoſtle tells us, not only that *Charity* (or a mutual Agreement among Church-Members) *edifies*, 1 *Cor.* viii. 1. but alſo aſſures us, that the whole Church or Collection of Members becomes an *holy Temple*, and *an Habitation of God*, by being συναρμολογουμένη, *compacted*, and cloſely *united* together in all its Parts, *Eph.* ii. 21, 22. and *Eph.* iv. 16. he tells us, that the Church *increaſes or improves unto the edifying itſelf in love, by being cloſely compacted and united in all its Parts and Members*; and *Col.* ii. 19. he tells us, that 'tis not only from its *Union with Chriſt*, and thoſe nouriſhing Influences that are thereby conveyed from him, that the Church *increaſes with the Increaſe of God*, but alſo from its *being knit together*, or firmly united in all its Parts. And if *Union* be ſo neceſſary to the Growth and Perfection of the *Church*, it can be no leſs neceſſary to the Improvement of each *particular* Member of it. For,

1. Schiſms and unneceſſary *Breaches* of Church-Communion do naturally *ſour* the Tempers of Men, and render them *peeviſh* and *uncharitable* towards one another. For the *ſeparating Party* muſt, in their own Vindication be forced to *accuſe* thoſe they ſeparate from of ſomething that may be foul enough to *juſtify* their *Separation*, and what they want in *Reality*, they muſt make up in *Pretence*, otherwiſe they will be lookt upon as *peeviſh* and *obſtinate* Schiſmaticks; and then the *Party* they *ſeparate from*, will be ſure to deem itſelf *injured*, and in its own Defence be forced to *recriminate*, and this will alarm the Separatiſts into *greater* Heats and Animoſities, and ſo like two Flints *daſh'd* together, they will be continually *ſparkling* and *ſpitting Fire* at one another, till they have *kindled* the Quarrel into an *unquenchable* Flame. Whereas had the Dividers but *continued* their Communion, all this might have been prevented, and they might have eaſily continued their *Charity*, tho they had retained the *Opinions* upon which they ſeparated: For had they but exerciſed that *Modeſty* and *Goodneſs*, as not to prefer their own *private* Sentiments before the *Reaſon* and *Peace* of the whole Church, they would either have kept their Opinions to *themſelves*, or at leaſt not have *advanced* them into *Principles* of Separation; and ſo by *continuing* in Communion with that Party of the Church from whence they *diſſented* in *Opinion*, they would have de-

clared, that they judged their Errors to be *tolerable:* For by *not separating* from them, they would have plainly manifested that they saw Reason enough to *unite* upon the Score of those Points in which they were agreed, but none to *disunite* upon the Score of these in which they *differed*; and consequently, that they had a great deal of Reason to *love*, but none to *hate*, and *persecute* one another; and whilst they *mutually* retained this good Opinion of one another, 'tis very unlikely that their *little Differences* should cause any great Breaches in their Charity. Schism therefore being so destructive to our *Charity*, which is one of the leading Virtues of our Religion, must needs have a very *malevolent* Aspect upon our *Perseverance:* For he that from a *charitable* Temper, relapses into a *spiteful* and *rancorous* one, is Apostatized from *one half* of the Religion of a Christian, and hath exchanged one of the *fairest* Graces of a *Saint*, for one of the *blackest* Characters of a *Devil*. And then,

2. Schisms, or unnecessary *Breaches* of Church-Communion, do naturally lead to the *foulest Hypocrisies:* For he that *separates* from a Church is a very bad Man, if he hath not a great *Opinion* of, and *Zeal* for those Things upon which he separates; which *Zeal* of his, when once he is *actually* separated, will be much more *inflamed*, and that both by the *Opposition* of the *Church* he is separated *from*, and the *Instigation* of the *Sect* he is separated to; and so by Degrees that *holy* Fervour which should *animate* him in the *plain* and *unquestionable* Duties of Religion, will *blaze* into a *fierce* Contention for those *little* Opinions that constitute the Sect he is ingaged in. For our Nature being *finite* and *limited* in all its Operations, it is impossible we should operate divers ways at once with *equal* Force and Vigour; but whatsoever Time and Attendance we *bestow* upon *one* Thing, we must necessarily *substract* from *another*. Now whilst we continue in a *peaceable* Communion with the Church, we have no other Use for our *Zeal*, but to *inspire* our Devotions, to *quicken* our Virtues, and to *fight against* our Sins with it, and this all Men agree, is the best Use it can be put to; but when once we are entered into a *schismatical Separation*, we shall find other Employment for it; namely, to *quarrel* at Ecclesiastical Constitutions, to *wrangle* about Modes and Circumstances of Worship, and *contend* for our *trifling* Speculations, and Opinions: which must necessarily *weaken* it in its *nobler* Operations, and render it more *remiss* and *indifferent* in the *great* and *indispensible* Duties of Religion; and whilst 'tis thus *impertinently* busied in *picking Straws*, and contending about *Mint* and *Cummin*, to be sure it must more or less neglect the *great* and *weighty* Things of the Law; and so proportionably as it grows *warmer* and *warmer* about little Opinions and Circumstances of Religion, it will be continually waxing *cooler* and *cooler* in the *necessary* and *essential* Duties of it; till at last 'tis wholly degenerated into *Peevishness* and *Faction*, and dwindled away into a *fierce* Contention about Trifles. That this is the natural Effect of Schism, appears by too many woful Experiments. For how many Instances of Men are there among our-selves, who had once an honest Zeal for the *Life* and *Substance* of Religion, and made great Conscience of *living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World*, but afterwards becoming *Bigots* to such a *Sect* or *Party*, have diverted the *Stream* of their Zeal into another *Channel*, where its irregular *Current* hath only made a *Noise*, and fill'd the World with a *loud* and *turbulent* Clamour about *little* Things, but as to those *great* and *important* Duties upon which their Happiness depends, hath been profoundly *mute* and *indifferent*; and so their Religion, like an *Hectick* Body, hath, by degrees, been consumed by its own *Heats*, whilst that Zeal and Fervour, which should *move* and *animate* it, hath been converted into its *Disease*, and wholly evaporated into *Faction* and *Turbulency*; and whilst their Zeal is thus misimployed about the *little* Trifles of their Sect, and they are ready to *start* at an *innocent* Ceremony, and to *swoon* at the sight of an *indifferent* Mode and Appendage of Religion, as if they were afraid lest it should *infect* them at a distance, they

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can *swallow* Camels, tho they *strain* at these Gnats, and *glibly* digest the *grossest* Immoralities.

3. And lastly, *Schisms* and unnecessary *Breaches* of Church-Communion, do naturally lead to *down-right Irreligion.* For when once a Man departeth from an *established* Church without a *just* Warrant, there is nothing can *confine* or set Shores to him, he hath no Principles that can stay him any where, or *set* any Measures of *Changing* to him: For when upon a meer *Humour* or *Fancy* he hath run from the Church to *such* a Sect, what should hinder him from running from *that* Sect to *another*, and so on from *Sect* to *Sect*, till he hath *run* himself *out* of all Religion? He is *rolling* down a *steep* Hill, and hath no Principles to *stay* him, so that 'tis impossible to determine *whither* he will *go*, or *where* he will *stop*; he may perhaps stay at *such* an Opinion, but if he doth, it is *by chance*, and if he doth *not*, he will be *endlesly* rolling from one Opinion to another, and shifting his *Church* as often as his *Almanack*: For Schism is a large *Labyrinth*, that naturally divides and subdivides into *infinite* Paths and Allies, wherein a Man may *wander* to Eternity, and the *farther* he goes, the more he may *lose himself*; and then when he hath wandred a while out of *one* wild Opinion into *another*, and still perceives that the farther he *goes*, the more he is *dissatisfied*, 'tis a thousand to one, if he doth not at last *suspect* and *question* all Religion, as if the whole were an *intricate* maze of *absurd* or *doubtful* Opinions, contriv'd on purpose to *amuse* Mens Minds, and *intangle* them in endless Perplexities. For the *Schismatick*, as I shewed before, doth commonly place a great Part of his Religion in *that* Opinion upon which he *divides* and *separates*, so that if once he be *dissatisfied* with *this*, as in all Probability he will quickly be, having begun already to *ring Changes*, he will be under a great Temptation to mistrust the *whole* Religion to be as great an Imposture as he finds this *darling Opinion* is, especially after he hath run thro' several *Sets* of Opinions, and finds them at last to be all *Delusions*: For as *weak* Heads, when they perceive the *Battlements* shake, are apt to suspect that the *Foundations* are *infirm*; so *weak* Understandings will be ready to suspect even the *fundamental* Principles of Religion, when once they perceive those *darling Notions* totter, which they have confidently presum'd to superstruct upon it. Upon this Account therefore I make no doubt, but that the *Atheism* of this present Age, is very much owing to its *Sects* and *Divisions*. For how many woful Examples have we of Persons, who had once a great deal of *Zeal* for, and *Satisfaction* in Religion, that upon their *causless* Defection from the Church's Communion, have run from *Sect* to *Sect*, and from one *extravagant* Opinion to another, till being at last convinced of the *Cheats* and *Impostures* of them all, they have discarded *Religion* itself, and made their last Resort into *Atheism* and *Infidelity*; since therefore *Schism* hath so many *Mischiefs* attending it, and such as do manifestly *endanger* our *Perseverance* in Religion, it highly concerns us, as we would hold out to the End in the Course of our Christian Warfare, to keep close to the *Communion* of the *Church*.

VI. To our *final* Perseverance in the Christian Warfare, it is also necessary that we should not *stint* our *Progress* in Religion (out of a *fond* Opinion that we are good *enough* already) to any determinate *Degrees* or *Measures* of Goodness: For thus we are injoined not only to *have Grace*, but still to be *growing in it*, 2 Pet. iii. 18. and not only to *do the Work of the Lord*, but to *abound in the doing it*, 1 Cor. xv. 58. and not only to *walk in all well-pleasing to God*, but *to abound in so doing more and more*, 1 Thess. iv. 1. *to forget what is behind*, i. e. the Degrees of Virtue and Goodness we have *already* attained, and to be still *pressing forward to the Mark of our high Calling*, Phil. iii. 13, 14. The Sense of all which is, that we should not *limit* ourselves to our *present* Attainments, out of a *slothful* Opinion that we are good *enough* already, but that we should still be proceeding on to *farther* and *farther* Degrees of Perfection. For Holi-

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nefs is every where injoined in the Gofpel in *unlimited* and *indefinite* Meafures, and our Progrefs in it had no other *Boundary* than the farthermoft Degree of *poffible* Perfection. An Injunction which will keep us for ever fufficiently *imployed*, and to oblige us to Eternity to be ftill *afpiring* beyond our *prefent* Attainments; and the *Neglect* of this is doubtlefs the Occafion of many a Man's *final* Mifcarriage. They aim at no more than what is *abfolutely* neceffary to *remove* them from the Brink of Eternal Perdition; and if they can but fo far *prevail* againft their *Sin*, as to arrive at the *lowermoft* Degree of fincere *Obedience*, and but juft pafs the Line which feparates between a *bad* and *good* State, that fo if they die as they are, they may hope to *efcape* Hell, and *arrive* at fome *Degree* of Happinefs, they think they have very fairly acquitted themfelves. But now befides, that *Line* which parts thofe Two States of Sin and Grace is not fo *eafily difcernible*, but that you may very probably be *deceived*, and *imagine* that you are got over it into the State of Grace, whilft you are yet upon the *Frontiers* of the Dominion of Sin, and fo may perifh at laft at the very *Mouth* of your *Harbour*; befides that, 'tis a fearful Sign that you are *yet in your Sins*, that you defign no *farther* but *juft* to efcape that *Everlafting Ruin* that attends them, which plainly fhews that the *Fear of Hell* is the *Soul* of your Religion, and that there is not the leaft Degree of true *Love to God* intermingled with it, without which your Religion will be altogether *infignificant*; befides all this, I fay, while you reft in fuch an *imperfect* State of *Goodnefs*, you dwell in the next *Neighbourhood* to a *finful* State, and fo are in continual Danger of *returning* thither again. For how is it poffible you fhould be *fafe*, while you ftay upon the *Brink* of that miferable State, out of which you are but juft *emerged* and *recovered*, and have fo many ftrong Inclinations *within* you, concurring with the numberlefs Temptations *without* you, to thruft you headlong *back again* into it? So that if you would be *fecure*, it is not fufficient for you juft to *get out* of your finful State, and ftay *there*, but you muft ftill be *removing* farther and farther from it, by *proceeding on* ftill to farther Degrees of Perfection: For you muft confider that there is a vaft Diftance between a State of *fincere*, and of *confirmed* Goodnefs, and that all the while you are paffing on from the *one* to the *other*, you are more or lefs in Danger of *Relapfing*. For you have been *fincerely* Good, ever fince your firft Entrance into a *firm* and *hearty* Refolution of Amendment; but, alas! fince *that*, how many times have you been in danger of relapfing into your old *finful* Courfes again? What ftrong Contentions have there been between your *Flefh* and your *Spirit*, your *bad* Inclinations, and your *pious* Refolutions? And tho the *latter* hath been moft *commonly* victorious, yet how often hath it been *yielding*, yea, how often hath it been *vanquifht*? Infomuch, that if you had not by a *quick* Repentance *revived* it *immediately*, it had been *dead* long fince, and you had been as much *enflaved* to your Lufts as ever. And from thefe Dangers you will never be *wholly* free, till you have *utterly* extinguifh'd your vicious Inclinations, and *inwrought* all the Virtues of Religion into your Natures; and then you will be arrived to that *confirmed* State of Goodnefs from which it will be *morally* impoffible for you to *revolt*. If therefore you would *fecure* your Perfeverance to the *End* beware you do not *limit* yourfelves in the *Way*; for tho if you die but juft *fincerely* Good, you fhall certainly efcape Hell; yet, in all probability you will not be long *fincerely* Good, unlefs you be *fomething more*; that is, unlefs you proceed in the *Degrees* of Virtue, and do more and more *fupprefs* your *evil*, and *improve* your *good* Difpofitions and Inclinations: For fo long as there remains in you any *Luft* to evil, you will be in Danger of being *betrayed* by it; and the *ftronger* that Luft is, the *more* it threatens your Deftruction. So that you can never be *fafe*, fo long as you have an Enemy *alive* in your Breaft and whilft you reft in any Attainment on this fide the *confirmed* State of Virtue, in which there is an *utter* Extinction of all *evil* Inclinations, you

are more or less in *Danger*, proportionably as you are more or less *distant* from that *happy* Period.

VII. To our *final* Perseverance, it is also necessary that we should frequently entertain ourselves with the Prospect of our *Mortality*, and endeavour to *compose* ourselves before-hand into a good *Posture* of *dying*. For thus we are called upon in this our *militant* State, *to consider our latter End*, Deut. xxxii. 29. and by the Examples of the best Men, are invited *to number our Days, that we may apply our Hearts unto Wisdom*, Psal. xc. 12. and *to wait till our Change comes*, Job xiv. 14. to which End we are put in Mind, that *here we have no abiding City*, Heb. xiii. 14. and *that 'tis appointed for all Men once to die*, Heb. ix. 27. and *that our Life is even as a Vapour, that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away*, James iv. 14. and to this Purpose the Apostle applies this Consideration, 1 *Cor*. vii. 29, 30, 31. Now *this I say, Brethren*, (that is, of our Abode and Continuance here, upon which he exhorts us to *compose* ourselves to a great *Indifferency*, as to the Things of this World) *it remains that both they that have Wives, be as tho they had none: and they that weep, as tho they wept not; and they that rejoice, as tho they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as tho they possessed not; and they that use this World as not abusing it; for the Fashion of this World passes away*, *i. e.* since your Time is here very *short*, endeavour before-hand, to *loosen* yourselves from this World, and to put yourselves into a fit Posture of *leaving* it; for 'tis but a short *Scene* that will quickly be *shifted*, and then there will an *eternal* State of things *succeed*.

And indeed, since to *die well*, is the *last* Act and *final* Consummation of our Christian Warfare, it must needs highly concern us to *arm* and *prepare* ourselves for it before-hand, lest we lose the blessed *Prize*, by *stumbling* just at the *Goal*, and, after a long *Voyage*, miscarry for ever within *Sight* of *Harbour*. For in the Hour of Death, we throw our last *Cast* for an Eternity of Happiness or Misery; and how much are we concerned to throw that *well*, upon which so vast a *Stake* depends? O! 'Tis a *serious* Thing to *die*; to pass this *dark* Entry of Eternity, thro' which, as we go, *right* or *wrong*, we are *made* or *undone* for ever: For to carry us *right* thro', 'tis not not a few *Death-bed* Sorrows, or *good* Wishes, a few *extorted* Promises, or *forced* Resolutions, or *frightful* Prayers, or *Lord have Mercy upon us*, will serve the Turn; O! no, it is an *expensive* Passage, which we shall never be able to *defray*, unless we carry along with us a *large Stock* of spiritual Preparations. We shall have need of a *strong* and *active* Faith, of a Mind well furnished with *wise* Considerations, of a *deep*, a *large*, and a *tried* Repentance, an *unrestrained* Charity, a *confirmed* Patience, a *profound* Submission to the Will of God, and a *well-grounded* Hope of a blessed Eternity: For without all these together, we shall be very *ill-accoutred* to die, and run a dreadful *Hazard* of miscarrying for ever. And these are such Things as do not usually spring up like *Mushrooms* in a Night, or in the few *disturbed* Moments of a *dying* Time, but do ask a much *larger* and *serener* Season to *grow* and *ripen* in. So that if we mean to *die well*, and so come off *victoriously* in this *last Act* of our spiritual Warfare, we must now, while we are well, be frequently entertaining our Meditations in the *Charnel-house*, and read *Lectures* to ourselves upon the *Skeletons* and *Death-heads* there, those Emblems and Representations of our approaching Mortality; and from them take such lively *Pictures* of the King of Terrors, as may render his *grim* Visage and *fearful* Addresses so familiar to us; as that our Thoughts may be before-hand accustomed to the manner of his *Approaches*; with what an *Army* of diseases he is wont to lay *Siege* to the Fort of our Life, how in Despight of all the Resistances of Nature, he *plants* and *quarters* them in our Veins or our Arteries, our Stomachs or our Bowels, and from thence *infests* us all over with continual Anguish and Pain; how when he hath *tired* and *exhausted* us with his continued *Batteries*, and worn out our Strength with a Succession of *wearisom* Nights to *sorrowful* Days, he at last

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storms the Soul out of all the *Out-works* of Nature, and forces it to *retire* into the Heart; and how when he hath marked us for dead, with a Baptism of *clammy* and *fatal* Sweats, he summons our weeping Friends to assist him, to *grieve* and *vex* us with their *parting* Kisses and *sorrowful* Adieus; and how at length, when he is weary of Tormenting us any more, he *rushes* into our Hearts, and with a few mortal Pangs and Convulsions, *tears* the Soul from thence, and *turns* it out to seek its Fortune in the *wide* World of Spirits; where 'tis either *seized* on by Devils, and carried away to their *dark* Prisons of *Sorrow* and *Despair*, there to languish out its Life in a dismal *Expectation* of that dreadful Day, wherein it must change its *bad* Condition for a *worse*; or be *conducted* by Angels to some *blessed* Abode, there to remain in *unspeakable* Pleasure and Tranquillity, till 'tis crowned with a *glorious* Resurrection. Now since 'tis *most certain* that we must all *one* time or *other* experience these Things, but *most uncertain* how *soon*; how much doth it concern us to *think* of them before-hand, and to fore-cast such *Provisions* and *Preparations* for them, as that whensoever they happen, we may not be *surprized*: For besides that, the frequent Meditation of Death will *familiarize* its Terrors to us; so that whenever it comes, our Minds, which have been so long accustomed to *converse* with it, will be much less *startled* and *amazed* at it; besides that, it will *wean* us from the *inordinate* Desire and *over-eager* Prosecution of the Things of this World, which, as I told you before, are the Snares with which our Vices do too often *intangle* us; besides all this, I say, it will put us upon laying in a *Store* of spiritual *Provisions* against that great Day of *Expence*. For he that often considers the *dreadful* Approaches, the *concomitant* Terrors, and the *momentous* Issues and Consequents of Death, must be strangely *stupified*, if he be not thereby vigorously *excited* to *fore-arm* and *fortify* himself with all those *Graces* and *Defences* that are necessary to render it *easy*, *safe* and *prosperous*.

VIII. To our *final* Perseverance in the Christian Warfare, it is also necessary, that in order to the putting ourselves into a good *Posture* to die, we should *discharge* our Consciences of all the *Reliques* and *Remains* of our past *Guilt*: For so we are commanded to take care *that our Hearts be sprinkled from an evil Conscience*, Heb. x. 22. and *to hold Faith and a good Conscience*, 1 Tim. i. 19. and *to make this our Rejoicing, the Testimony of our Conscience, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, we have had our Conversation in the World*, 2 Cor. i. 12. In a Word, *to live in all good Conscience*, Acts xxiii. 1. and *to have a Conscience void of Offence, towards God, and towards Men*, Acts xxiv. 16. which, tho they are *General* Duties, do necessarily imply this *Particular*, that we should very *nicely* and *curiously* examine our Consciences, those faithful *Records* and *Registers* of our Actions, and where-ever we find the least *Item* of an *uncancelled* Guilt, immediately *cross* it *out* by a hearty *Sorrow* for, and moral *Revocation* of it: For notwithstanding, we may have in the *general* repented of all our past Sins; yet there are some Sins, which, notwithstanding we re-act no more, do leave a *lasting* Guilt upon the Mind, which nothing can *cancel* but our *actual* revoking and *unsinning* them. As supposing that I have heretofore, either by my bad *Counsels* or *Example*, seduced other Men into wicked Courses; it is not sufficient for the Expiation of my Fault, that I *myself* abstain from those wicked Courses for the future, but I must endeavour to *undo* the Mischief which I have done to *others* by them, and by a solemn *Recantation* of my past Follies, by *Persuasion* and good *Counsel*, and the Application of all other *pious* and *prudent* Means, endeavour to *reduce* those whom I have formerly *perverted*. For till I have done this, I *wilfully* permit the mischievous *Effect* of my Sin to *remain*; and if when I have *wounded* another, I suffer him to *perish*, without taking any Care of his *Cure*, I am guilty of his *Murder*, tho I never wound him *more*. Suppose again, that I have injured another by any malicious *Slander* or *Calumny*; it is not enough to acquit me of the Guilt

Guilt of it, that I *ceaſe* to *ſcandalize* him for the future, but I muſt alſo endeavour by a free *Retractation* to *vindicate* his injured Name from the ill *Surmiſes* of thoſe to whom I have *aſperſt* him; for ſo long as his *Reputation* ſuffers thro' my *not Retracting* the Calumnies I have caſt upon it, I wilfully perſiſt to *defame* and *calumniate* him, and ſo long the *Guilt* of it muſt *ſtick* and *abide* upon my Conſcience. Once more, ſuppoſe I have injured another in his *Eſtate*, either by *Theft* or *Fraud*, or *Oppreſſion*, it will not be ſufficient to acquit me, that for the future I *forbear* defrauding, forcing, or ſtealing from him any more, but, if it be in my Power, I muſt make *Reſtitution* of all that I have wrongfully *deprived* him of; and that to *himſelf*, if he be *living*, or if not, to thoſe that ſucceed him in his *Rights*; and for want of *ſuch*, to the *Poor*, who, by God's Donation, have the Propriety of all ſuch *Wefts* and *Strays*, as have no other Owner ſurviving: For it's certain that my *wrongful* Seiſure of what is another Man's, doth not *alienate* his *Right* to it, ſo that he hath the ſame Right to it while *I keep* it from him, as he had at firſt, when I *took* it from him, and conſequently, till I *reſtore* it back to him, I *continue* to wrong him of it; and my *detaining* it is a continued *Repetition* of that *Fraud*, or *Theſt*, or *Oppreſſion*, by which I wrongfully ſeized it; and whilſt I thus *continue* the Sin, 'tis impoſſible but the Guilt of it muſt ſtill *abide* upon me. In theſe Caſes therefore it concerns us to be very *nice* and *curious* in examining our *Accounts*, to ſee if there be any of theſe *Scores* yet *uncancelled*, any of theſe bad *Effects* of our Sin yet *remaining*: For if any ſuch Matter appear in our *Accounts*, it concerns us as much as our everlaſting Intereſt amounts to, to uſe all preſent Care and Diligence to *diſcharge* it, that ſo before Death ſummons us to give up our Accounts to the great *Auditor* of the World, all *Scores* between him and us may be *even'd* and *adjuſted*. And indeed if we would be ſafe, it vaſtly imports us to leave as little as may be to do upon a *Death-bed*; for that is moſt commonly a very *improper* State for religious Action; ſince, for all we know, we may be *diſtracted* in it by a *Fever*, or *ſtupified* by an *Apoplexy*, or *deprived* of the Uſe of Reaſon by the inſufferable Torments of a *Stone*; either of which will render us incapable of *every Thing* but *Dying*. Or, if neither of theſe ſhould happen, yet to be ſure a *dying* State will bring Work *enough* with it; *Sorrows* and *Care* enough, *Fears* and *Impatiencies* enough to *exerciſe* all our Virtue, and *employ* all our Reaſon. So that if we carry with us to our Death-bed any *Item* or *Relique* of *uncancell'd* Guilt, 'tis a thouſand to one, but in the *Hurry* of dying, we ſhall leave it *uncancell'd*, and be arreſted for it by the Divine Juſtice, when we come into Eternity. Wherefore, as we would prevent this *fatal* Iſſue of our Chriſtian Warfare, it concerns us now we are *well*, to make a *diligent* Inſpection into our Conſciences, to ſee if there yet remains any old *Reckonings* of Guilt *undiſcharged* by us; and if there be, not to give *reſt* to our Eyes, nor *ſlumber* to our Eye-lids, till by an actual *unſinning* and Revocation of the Facts, we have totally *croſſed* and *diſcharged* them. But then becauſe many of theſe may ſlip out of our Mind, and ſo be paſt Recovery;

IX. To the happy *Concluſion* of this our Chriſtian Warfare, 'tis alſo neceſſary, that to *compenſate*, ſo far as we are able, for theſe *Reliques* of Guilt in us, we ſhould take care to *redeem* the Time we have formerly miſpent in *ſinful* Courſes, by being *doubly* diligent in the Exerciſe of all the contrary *Virtues*, and the doing all the contrary *Good* we are able: For of all the *outward* Bleſſings that God affords us, our *Time* is incomparably the moſt *precious* and *ineſtimable*; and therefore tho he gives us his other Bleſſings in great *Variety*, and provides for us a *plentiful* Choice of Meats, Drinks, and Raiment, yet in the Diſtribution of our Time, he ſeems to be more *ſparing* and *ſtrait-handed*; for he gives it not to us in *Rivers*, but *Drop* by *Drop*, and *Minute* after *Minute*, ſo that we can never enjoy *two* Moments *together*, but when ever he gives us *one*, he always takes away *another*. And yet, good God! what

Waste do we make of these precious Drops of which thou art so *nice* and *sparing*? How great a Part of it do we consume in our *Childhood*, upon the indifferent Vanities of *Nuts* and *Rattles*, and afterwards upon the much more *ridiculous* and *unreasonable* ones of our *vicious*, *profuse* and *extravagant* Appetites? So that by that time we come to a *serious* Prosecution of the great End of our Beings, the *main* Part of our Time is usually *elapsed* beyond Revocation. How much therefore doth it concern us, after we have so *prodigally* squandered away the *greatest* Part of the Treasure of our Time, to make the best Improvement of the *small* Remainder? that so we may at least *morally* recover that which is *Physically* irrecoverable: For tho we cannot cause the *past* Minutes we have ill spent to be *present* again, yet we can *redouble* our Diligence for the future, and thereby render every *one* Minute *to come* equivalent to every *two* that are *past*: For by a *double* Diligence we may live as much in *one* Day, as we can in *two* by a *single*; and consequently, by *doubly* improving that Part of our Time, which is yet good and *to come*, we may *morally* retrieve that Part which is *lost* and *gone*.

This therefore the Gospel requires at our Hands, that after we have lived out a great Part of our Time to no purpose, we should from thenceforth live *much* in a *little* while, and retrieve our *past* Negligence by our *future* Diligence, and *redeem* the Time we have spent upon our Lusts, by exerting the contrary Virtues more *vigorously* for the future; that the more *profane* we have been for the Time past, the more *devout* we should be for the Time to come; that the more we have abounded heretofore in *Frauds* and *Oppressions*, the more we should abound hereafter in *Charity* and *Alms*; that the more *industrious* we have been to *seduce* and *debauch* Men, the more *zealous* we should be to *reduce* and *reclaim* them; and by our future *Candour* and *Charitable* Construction of Men, endeavour to *compensate* for the Malice of our past *Slanders* and *Defamations*. Thus *Eph.* v. 28. *Let him that stole, steal no more*; ay, but that is not enough, but he must also endeavour to *redeem* his past Thefts by a more *vigorous* Exercise of the contrary Virtue for the future; *but rather let him labour, working with his own Hands the Thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needs.* So also, *Dan.* iv. 27. *Break off thy Sins by Righteousness, and thine Iniquities, by shewing Mercy to the Poor*, i. e. whereas for the Time past, the Course of thy Life hath very much abounded with *Cruelty* and *Injustice*, do thou now endeavour to *redeem* the Guilt of it (for so the *Hebrew Verb* signifies) by exerting more *vigorously* the contrary Virtues, *viz.* of *Justice* to *all*, and of *Mercy* to the *poor* and *afflicted*. And to this purpose St. *Paul*'s Example is proposed to our Imitation, who, because for the Time past he had been a great *Persecutor* of Christianity, did, for the future, labour *more abundantly* than any other Apostle, to *advance* and *propagate* it, 1 *Cor.* xv. 9, 10. The Observance of which Rule is highly necessary to the reducing this our Warfare to a prosperous Issue: For, as I told you before, there are many Sins, which, after we have forsaken the Practice of them, do *stick* such a Guilt upon the Conscience, as without our *undoing* them, so far as we are able, is not to be *wiped off*; such as wicked *Counsel*, malicious *Detraction*, and unjust *Gain*, all which we are bound, so far as 'tis in our Power, not only to *avoid*, but actually to *revoke*. But alas! there are many of these, which, in a long Course of Sin, are utterly *forgotten* by us, and consequently are past *Revocation*, and in this Case, all we can do to take off the Guilt of them, is, in the general Course of our Lives to *abound* in the Practice of the *contrary* Virtues, and to do the utmost Service we are able to the *Souls* and *good Names*, and *Bodies* of Men. For *Charity*, saith the Apostle, *shall cover a multitude of Sins*, 1 Pet. iv. 8. that is, when it appears by the *abundance* of our *Charity*, that we would *abolish* and *repair* all the Injuries we have done, if it were in our Power, God in this Case will accept the *Will* for the *Deed*, and deal as *mercifully* by us as if we had *actually* done it. For if it appear in his Sight

Sight that we *would* do it if we *could*, we are in his Account as truly *obedient* to him, as if we had actually *performed* it, and consequently shall be dealt with by the same Proportions of Mercy. But 'tis only an *extraordinary* Charity that can evidence this; since what is *ordinary* we are obliged to, tho we had no past *Injuries* to abolish; but to *insure* our Reconciliation with God, it is requisite that we should evidence to him our *sincere* Willingness, to do not only what we *should have* been obliged to, if we had *not* been *injurious*, but also what we *are* obliged to since we *have* been injurious. Now as *actual Reparation*, so far as we are able, is necessary to evidence this, when we *remember* the Injuries we have done, so an *extraordinary Charity* is no less necessary to evidence this, when we have forgotten them. And this I suppose is the meaning of that *Parallel* Passage of St. *James*, chap. v. 20. *He that converteth a Sinner from the Error of his Way, shall save a Soul from Death, and shall hide a multitude of Sins*; i. e. by such an *illustrious* Act of Charity to the *Soul* of his Brother, he shall obtain Pardon of God for many of those *forgotten* Injuries which he hath formerly done, and is now no *otherwise* able to repair. So that if we would make *sure* Work of our Christian Warfare, and *ascertain* its being *finally* crowned with Success; as in *general* we must endeavour to *redeem* the past Time we have spent in vicious Courses, by *abounding* in the Practice of the *contrary* Virtues; so in *particular*, if for the Time past we have lived in any of those *injurious* Courses which do naturally fix a more *lasting* Guilt upon the Mind, we must take care not only to repair, so far as we are able, those Injuries we *remember*, but also to wipe off the Guilt of those we have *forgotten*, by an *extraordinary* Charity and Beneficence, by laying hold of all *Opportunities* to do Good, and endeavouring in our several Stations, according as God hath enabled us, to *reduce* the Souls, *relieve* the Bodies, and *vindicate* the Reputation of our Brethren.

X. And Lastly, To our *final* Perseverance in well-doing, it is also necessary that we should labour after a *rational* and *well-grounded Assurance* of Heaven. I put this in the *last* Place, because 'tis usually the *last* attained, and is not to be presently *expected* and *catch'd at*, as soon as we are entered into a Religious State: For there are a great many Stages of Religion to be past, before we can modestly expect to arrive at *Assurance*. In the *Beginning* of our Religion, when we are just *recovered* out of a vicious State, we cannot but be sensible, if we do at all understand ourselves, that we are as yet in a great deal of *Danger*, and do *border* so very near upon that *bad* State we are escaped from, that 'tis almost impossible to distinguish whether we are *in* or *out* of it: For tho we are fully *purposed* and *resolved* against it, yet we cannot well divine what will be the *Issue* of it. Our *Resolution* is yet so *young*, so *raw* and *unexperienced*, and *besieged* with so many powerful counter-striving Inclinations, that we cannot *confide* in it without great *Folly* and *Presumption*: For till sufficient Trial hath been made of it, for all that we know, it may prove to be only a Godly *Mood*, or a short *Lucid Interval* between the *raving* Fits of our Lust and extravagant Affections, which, in a few Days perhaps, may *return* again, and utterly *alienate* and *distract* us from all our *sober* Counsels and Purposes. And if it should so happen, that which we now look upon as our *Cure* and *Recovery*, will prove but an *Intermission* of our Disease. And when for some time we have *tried* our Resolution, and found that it hath bravely *resisted* those Temptations that have hitherto assaulted it, yet we cannot *presently* be reasonably *assured* of it, considering the *Fickleness* and *Inconstancy* of our Nature: For it may be, it hath not been yet assaulted on the *weak* side, or it hath not been *nick'd* with a *seasonable* Temptation, or it may be, we may be more *remiss* and *careless* another Time, or more *vehemently inclined* to a vicious Compliance; and then those Temptations which we have *hitherto* conquered, may *captivate* and *subdue* us. And if it thus happen, that which we now look upon as an everlasting *Breach* between us and our Lusts,

may prove only a *Pet* or ſhort *Diſtaſte*, and, like the falling out of Lovers, end in the renewing of Love. And till we have made ſome conſiderable Progreſs in the *mortification* of our *ſinful* Inclinations, and the *Acquiſition* of their *contrary* Habits, our Religion will have ſo many *Flaws*, *Defects*, and *Imperfections* in it, as will give us great Reaſon, if we have any modeſty in us, to be very *fearful* and *jealous* of it. But ſince without *Sincerity* in Religion we can have no *Title* to Heaven, it hence follows, that without a *clear Senſe* of our Sincerity, we can have no *Aſſurance* of our Title to it; and ſuch a *clear Senſe* as is neceſſary to found ſuch an *Aſſurance* on, is not to be acquired, you ſee, without a *thorow* Trial of our Reſolution in a *long* and *vigorous* Courſe of Religion. So that for Men to be immediately *ſnatching* at Aſſurance, as ſoon as ever they are *entred* into a good Life, argues them not to be ſo ſenſible, as they ſhould be, of their own *Imperfection* and *Frailty*; they ought in Modeſty to *expect* a while and not conclude *too ſoon* for themſelves, till they have made a *thorow* Trial of their Reſolution; and in the mean time to *ſtrive on*, in Hope that by the Bleſſing of God concurring with their *Endeavours*, they ſhall *at laſt* attain ſuch a certain *Senſe* and *Feeling* of their own *Sincerity*, as will be ſufficient to infer a *firm* and *rational* Aſſurance. For Aſſurance being the Top of Chriſtian Attainment, we muſt aſcend to it *gradually*, by the intermediate Staves and Rounds of a *tried* and *laſting* Obedience, and not *leap up* in an Inſtant before we have taken all the Steps and Degrees that lead thither.

But tho we ought not to be too *forward* in our Aſſurance, yet we are bound to labour after it in a *due* and *regular* Way; that is, To perſiſt in our Obedience till we have reduced our *inward* and *outward* Motions to ſuch a *Degree* of Conformity to the *Standard* of the Goſpel, as that upon comparing *ourſelves* with *it*, we may be able, without *Flattery* or *Preſumption*, to conclude our own *Sincerity* and *Uprightneſs*. I know there is a much *ſhorter* Paſſage to Aſſurance, which ſome of late have pretended to; and that is, by certain unaccountable *Incomes* and *Manifeſtations* of God's Spirit, who, as they pretend, doth immediately *whiſper* and *reveal* to them their Title and Intereſt in Heaven. But this, alas! is too much like the *North-Eaſt* Paſſage to the *Indies*, which is *ſhorter* indeed, if it could be found, but ſo very *dangerous*, that I doubt there are but few that *attempt* it but *miſcarry*, and 'tis well if they do not *finally* periſh in the *Diſcovery*. Not that I do in the leaſt doubt but God doth many Times *ſuggeſt* and *whiſper* unſpeakable *Comforts* and *Aſſurances* to the Minds of good Men; but then it is to be conſidered, that this is an *arbitrarious* Gift, which he ſeldom, if ever, beſtows but in *extraordinary* Caſes, when 'tis neceſſary to *encourage* us to ſome great *Work*, or to *ſupport* us under ſome extraordinary *Suffering*. For he is a *wiſe* and *careful* Father of his Children, and knows 'tis much more neceſſary for us to be *good*, than to be *raviſhed* and *tranſported*; and that ſuch *high* Cordials are neither *proper* nor *ſafe* for us but in great *Extremities*; and therefore for us to expect that he ſhould make them our ordinary *Food* and *Entertainment* is an Argument of our childiſh Ignorance and Preſumption. But tho ſuch immediate *Whiſpers* and *Revelations* may ſerve to good Purpoſes in a Pinch of Extremity, yet are they by no means to be *built upon* as the Foundations of our *ordinary*, *ſtanding* Aſſurance. For ſo long as there is an evil Spirit *without*, and a diſordered Fancy *within* us, that can *imitate* theſe Whiſpers, we ſhall be continually liable, ſo long as we put Confidence in them, to all the *Cheats* and Impoſtures of *natural* and *diabolical* Enthuſiaſm, and unavoidably miſtake many an *Injection* of the Devil, and many a warm *Fluſh* of Fanſy, or briſk *Fermentation* of Melancholy Humour, for a *Whiſper* and *Teſtimony* of the Spirit of God, and by this means be often *lull'd* into *falſe* Confidences and Aſſurances, which, like Golden Dreams, will *vaniſh* when we awake, and leave us miſerably *diſappointed*. That Aſſurance

therefore which we are to aim at, must be *founded* in the Testimony of a good Conscience, and *inferr'd* from the Sense of our own Integrity and Uprightness.

And this we are commanded to endeavour after; so *Heb.* x. 22. we are bid *to draw near unto God*, ἐν πληροφορίᾳ πίστεως, in *Confidence*, or *full assurance of Faith*, that is, in a *firm* Persuasion of God's Love to us, and our Interest in his Promises; which Persuasion is to be founded upon an inward Sense of our having *our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience, and our Bodies wash'd with pure Water*; and accordingly, *Heb.* vi. 11. *to be diligent in good Works, to the full assurance of hope unto the end*, *i. e.* to be so *diligent* in our Duty as that we may thereby acquire such a full *Assurance* of our Reward as may enable us to *continue* and *hold out* to the End. For St. *John* tells us, that 'tis by the Integrity of our Virtue, and particularly of our *love to one another*, that we are *to assure our Hearts before God*, 1 John iii. 14, 19. for, saith he, *ver.* 21. *If our Hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God*; and for this purpose among others, the same Apostle tells us, he *wrote this Catholick Epistle*, that true Christians might *know and be assured that they had eternal Life*, 1 John v. 13.

From all which 'tis evident, That 'tis our Duty to labour after such an *Assurance* of Heaven, as naturally ariseth from the *clear* and *certain* Sense of our *Sincerity* towards God, and the *firm Belief* of the *Promise* of eternal Life, to which our Sincerity intitles us. For when we are so far *improved* in Religion, as that upon an *impartial* Survey of ourselves, we can feel our own *Integrity*, and sensibly perceive that our *Intention* is pure, our *Resolution* fix'd, and our *Heart* intirely devoted to God, we may from thence most certainly infer our *Title* and *Interest* to the Promise of Heaven. So that to the obtaining this *Assurance*, all that we have to do is, so far to *purify* our Intentions from sinister Aims, and *subdue* our bad Inclination to our Resolution and Obedience, as that whenever we *reflect* upon, and *compare* ourselves with the *Rule*, our Conscience may be able without any Diffidence to pronounce us *sincere*; and then we may as *certainly* conclude our Interest in Heaven, as we can, that God's Promises are true; and if after we are thus far improved in Religion, we still remain *unassured*, it proceeds not from the Want of *sufficient* Evidence, but either from a *melancholy* Temper, or a *weak* Faith, or a *misinformed* Conscience; and which soever of these is the Cause of it, when that is once removed, we shall as plainly *feel* our own Sincerity, and therein our Interest in Heaven, as we do now our *bodily* Passions. And having once attained this Assurance, 'twill *animate* our Hearts with an Heroick Courage against all Temptations, and carry us on with unspeakable *Alacrity* thro' all the remaining Stages of our Duty; it will *invigorate* our Endeavours, and *wing* our Activity, and make us all *Life* and *Spirit* in the Exercises of our holy *Religion*. And as when the Christian Army, after a tedious March towards the Land of *Canaan*, came within view of the *holy City*, and beheld *afar off* the Towers and Turrets of *Jerusalem*, they were so *exstasied* with Joy, that they made the Heavens *ring* with triumphant Shouts and Acclamations, and as if that Sight had given *new* Souls to them, ran on upon their Enemies with a Courage that forced Victory where-ever they came: So when a good Man after a long *Progress* from one Degree of Virtue to another, is got so far as that from a certain *Sense* and *Feeling* of his own Sincerity he can discern the *new Jerusalem* above, and his own Interest in it, that blessed Sight will fill him with so much *Joy*, *Courage* and *Alacrity*, that no Temptation for the future will be able to *withstand* or *interrupt* him. So that his Conscience will be always ringing with Acclamations of Victory, and the remainder of the March will be all a *Triumphal Progress* to him; and when he comes to the Conclusion of it, to die, and pass the Gate of this blessed City, the firm *Assurance* which he hath of Admittance, will *dispel* the Fears, *sweeten* the Troubles,

Troubles, and *aſſwage* the Pangs and Agonies of the *dolorous* Paſſage. So that he will die, not only with *Peace*, but with *Joy*, and go away into Eternity with *Hallelujahs* in his Mouth. If therefore we mean to bring this our Spiritual Warfare to a *happy* Concluſion, it concerns us now, while we have Opportunity, to labour after a *wiſe* and *well-grounded* Aſſurance of Heaven.

SECT. VI.

Containing certain Motives *to preſs Men to the Practice of theſe Duties of* Perſeverance *in the* Chriſtian Warfare.

HAVING in the foregoing Section deſcribed all thoſe Duties which appertain to the *laſt* Part of our Chriſtian Warfare, to wit, *final Perſeverance*; and ſhewn how effectually they all contribute thereunto, I ſhall now, according to my former Method, conclude with ſome *Motives* to *preſs* and *perſuade* Men to the Practice of them; all which I ſhall deduce from the Conſideration of the *great* and *urgent* Neceſſity of our *final* Perſeverance, to which thoſe Duties are ſuch neceſſary Helps and Means. For unleſs we take in the Aſſiſtance of theſe Duties, in all Probability we ſhall never be able to *hold out to* the End; and unleſs we *perſevere* to the End, we are guilty of the moſt *fatal* and *miſchievous* piece of Folly in the World. For conſider,

1. If after we have made ſome *progreſs* in Religion, we *wilfully relapſe*, we ſhall *go back* much *faſter* than ever we have *proceeded*.

2. If once we *totally relapſe*, we ſhall thereby forfeit all the *Fruit* of our *paſt* Labour.

3. We ſhall forfeit the Fruit of our Labour after we have undergone the *greateſt Difficulty* of it.

4. We ſhall not only forfeit the Fruit of our paſt Labour, but alſo render our *Recovery* more *hazardous* and *difficult* than ever.

5. We ſhall not only render our *future* Recovery more difficult, but alſo plunge ourſelves for *the preſent* into a far more *Guilty* and *Criminal* Condition than ever.

6. We ſhall not only render ourſelves for *the preſent* more guilty, but as a certain Conſequence of that, expoſe ourſelves, if we die in our *Apoſtaſy*, to a *Deeper* and more *Dreadful* Ruin.

I. Conſider, When once we have *wilfully relapſed*, unleſs we *immediately* recover, we ſhall go much *faſter back*, than ever we went *forward*: For in the Beginning of our *religious* Progreſs, we are fain to *ſail* for a great while againſt *Wind* and *Tide*, againſt a ſtrong *Gale* of Temptation from without, and a rapid *Stream* of Inclination from within, and while we do thus, we muſt be contented to get our ground by *Inches*, and move forward by *ſlow* and *inſenſible* Degrees; but in all our *wilful Apoſtaſies*, we are carried on *ſecundo flumine*, with a *full Drift* of Temptation and Inclination: So that if when once we have *wilfully ſinn'd* we do not *immediately* check ourſelves by Repentance, in all Probability we ſhall be driven farther *back* in a *Day*, than we ſhall be able to get *forward* in a *Week*. For your Progreſs in Religion lying *up* Hill, but your Apoſtaſy *down*, you muſt expect, when once you are *falling*, to *deſcend* much *faſter* than ever you *aſcended*, and to get far ſooner to the *Bottom* again than you can to the *Top*, tho you ſhould happen to fall juſt in the *mid-way*, and have no farther to the *one* than to the *other*. For 'tis hardly to be imagined, what ſtrength a bad Inclination gets by a ſhort *Repaſt* and *Gratification*; how when it hath been almoſt *pined away* by a long Abſtinence, a Taſte of ſinful Pleaſure will *raiſe* and *revive* it, and render it as

brisk and *vigorous* as ever; insomuch, that it usually requires a great *many* Acts of Mortification, to re-extinguish that Life and Strength it acquires in *one* short Gratification. For as the fierce *Tiger*, after a long Confinement, will lie down *tamely* in his Den, and by Degrees lose all his *Fierceness*, and grow *manageable* and *obsequious*; but let him take but one warm Draught of Blood, and his own *savage* Nature immediately *revives*, and he grows as *cruel* and *outragious* as ever; just so it is with our wicked Inclinations, which being reduced from their Excesses, and kept under the close Confinement of a holy Resolution, will by Degrees grow *tame* and *gentle*, and forget the *alluring* Relishes of Sin, but if once we suffer them to *break loose* again, and to come at those sinful Pleasures from which they have been a long while *alienated*, they will soon recover their natural *Wildness*, and become as *head-strong* and *violent* as ever: Wherefore it mightily concerns us to have a great Care of all *wilful Apostasies*; for to be sure your *first* Slip will vehemently incline you to a *second*, and that more vehemently to a *third*, and so, like Men that are running *head-long* down Hill, the *farther* you go, the more you will be *prest forward* by your own Weight, and the harder 'twill be for you to *stop* and *recover* yourselves. So that if you do not *immediately* stop, you will by a *few Day's* Sin, lose back all the ground you have got by *many a Year's* Warfare; you will *pull down* more of your Religion by *one* wilful Sin, than you will be able to *repair* again by *many* a virtuous Action; and like some *prodigal Drudges*, spend more in one *mad Frolick*, than you have earn'd by many a *hard* Day's Labour. And if you do thus, 'tis impossible you should ever *improve*; for what you *do* in a *Week*, you will *undo* again in a Day; and so instead of pressing *forward*, you will dance in a *Circle*, and always *end* where you *begun*. So that unless you *go on* and *persevere* in well-doing, all your Strife and Warfare against Sin will be but like *rolling* of a *Sisyphus*'s Stone, which after you have been a *long while* raising to the Top of the Hill, will in a *moment* tumble down again upon you; so that either you must undergo the *same* Pains to raise it *again*, or *lie down* under it, and tamely suffer your selves to be *crush'd* into eternal Ruin by it.

II. Consider, If after we have made some Progress in Religion we *totally relapse*, we thereby forfeit the *Fruit* of all our *past* Labour. For so God himself by the Prophet pronounces in the Case, *Ezek.* xviii. 24. *When the Righteous turn away from his Righteousness, and commits Iniquity, and doth according to all the Abominations that the wicked Men doth, shall he live? all his Righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned; in the Trespass that he hath Trespassed, and in the Sin that he hath Sinned, in them he shall die, i. e.* how good soever he may have been for the Time *past*, if he doth not *persevere* to the End, but *wilfully relapse* into Folly and Wickedness, all the *Virtue* he hath exercised, and all the *Good* he hath done, shall be quite *struck off* from his Accounts, and be never so much as *mentioned* to his Benefit and Advantage; but in that Wickedness whereinto he is *fallen*, he shall as certainly perish as if all his Life had been a *continued* Act, or *uninterrupted* Course of Iniquity. So also, *Heb.* x. 38. *If any shall draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.* And, indeed, this is a most necessary Effect of our *Apostasy*; for by *falling off* from our Christian Course, we put ourselves *back* into the same State and Condition wherein we were before we *enter'd* upon it; and the *Effect* of all those good Things which we did from the Time we *enter'd upon*, to the Time we *deserted* it, will be so *voided* and *abolished*, that there will not remain the least *Trace* or *Footstep* of it in our Natures, but our *Will* will become as *obstinate* again, our *Affections* and *Appetites* as *wild* and *extravagant*, as if we had all along permitted them to run on in an *uninterrupted* Course of Iniquity. And having thus *extinguish'd* all the *good* Effects of our past Warfare, and render'd by our *wilful* Apostasy our Natures as *corrupt* and *depraved* as ever, we shall thereby be exposed again to the *Wrath* and *Displeasure* of God. For God's *Love* and *Hatred* are unvariably

unvariably determined to the ſame Grounds and Reaſons, and herein conſiſts their *Immutability*, not that he always *loves*, or always *hates* the *ſame* Perſons, out of a *blind* Fondneſs to the one, or *unreaſonable* Prejudice to the other, but that he always *loves* and always *hates* them for the *ſame* Reaſons; and he hath expreſly declared, that *Goodneſs* and *Wickedneſs* are the *contrary* Reaſons of this his *contrary* Affection to his Creatures; which if it be, 'twill hence neceſſarily follow, that as his *Hatred* muſt convert into *Love* to us, when from *wicked* we become *good*, ſo his *Love* muſt convert into *Hatred* of us when from *good* we degenerate into *wicked*. Which Alteration of his Affection towards us, proceeds not from any change in *his* Nature, but from a change in *ours*; he always proceeds upon *ſteady* and *unchangeable* Principles, and is for ever *fixt* and *conſtant* to the Reaſons of his *Love* and *Hatred*; which he could not be, if he did not alter his *Affection* to us, when the *Reaſon* of it is alter'd; if he did not *abominate* us when he ſees us fallen and *degenerated* from that State of *Goodneſs*, for the ſake of which he *loved* us, and took *pleaſure* in us. So that, by wilfully *retreating* from our religious Progreſs, we do not only extinguiſh all thoſe good *Effects* which it had *produced* in our Natures, not only *revive* thoſe inveterate Luſts we had almoſt *mortified*, and *blaſt* thoſe tender Graces which we had therein *acquired* and *improved*, but as a Conſequence of this, we *run* out of God's Arms and Embraces, and *throw* ourſelves *headlong* from thoſe glorious Hopes to which we have been all this while *advancing* with ſo much Labour and Difficulty. What a madneſs therefore is it for Men to think of *retreating*, that have once actually *engaged* in the Chriſtian Warfare, to *ſurrender* themſelves back into Captivity to their Luſts, after they have fought ſo many *Combats* againſt, and obtained ſo many *Victories* over them! O conſider but the great *Pains* you have been at, the many *Prayers* and *Tears*, *Abſtinences* and *Self-denials*, *Struggles* and *Contentions* with yourſelves, that it hath coſt you to *retrieve* yourſelves from the *Dominion* of Sin, and the juſt *Vengeance* of God; and is it not a thouſand Pities that all this ſhould prove *loſt labour* in the End, and be render'd as *fruitleſs* and *inſignificant* to us as if it had *never* been? That after you have taken ſo much Pains to *ſtem* the difficult *Tide*, and are, at laſt, got within ſight of *Shore*, you ſhould now *faint* and *yield* to the Fury of it, and ſuffer yourſelves to be *borne down* by it again into that *Ocean* of Sin and Guilt, out of which you were ſo lately recovered? Wherefore as you would not render *your labour in vain in the Lord*, and utterly defeat yourſelves of all the *Fruit* of your Religious *Endeavours*, be ſtill perſuaded to *ſtruggle* and *contend*, to *ſtrive* and *preſs forward to the mark of your high-calling*: For if you now *ſlacken* or *remit* your Endeavours, and *yield* to the Current of Temptation, you will ſoon be *driven down* by it again as far from the *Love* of God, and from the *Hope* of Heaven as ever you were in the moſt *degenerate* State of your Natures.

III. Conſider, That if, by *wilfully ſinning*, we retreat from our Chriſtian Warfare, we ſhall forfeit the Fruit of our Labour after we have undergone the *greateſt Difficulty* of it. For, as I ſhewed above, the *main* Difficulty of the Chriſtian Warfare lies in the *Entrance* of it, and this I *ſuppoſe* you to have already paſt. You have already endured thoſe ſharp *Pangs* and *Throws* that are wont to accompany the *Birth* of a new Reſolution; you have undergone the hard *Penance* of a deep and thorow Conſideration, the ſharp *Stings* and *Remorſes* of a ſolemn and ſorrowful Repentance; you have *forc'd* your moſt *importunate* Inclinations, and *withſtood* the moſt *violent* Counter-ſtruggling of a *perverſe* and *degenerate* Nature; you have *conquered* your Will in the Height of all its *Obſtinacy* and *Reſiſtance*, and *reſcued* it from the Arms of your Luſts when 'twas moſt *inſlaved* and *captivated* by them: all *this* you did, if you did any thing to any purpoſe, when you firſt *entered* upon this holy Warfare; and ever ſince you have been *breaking* the Strength of your evil Inclinations, and *conquering* the Antipathies of your Nature to your Religion; in which,

which, if you have made any *Progress*, you must by this Time, have *broken the Heart* of the Difficulty of your Warfare, and have much *less* Opposition to contend with *than ever*. So that now, in all Probability, there is nothing so *difficult* between you and Heaven, as that which you have already *ingaged* with and *surmounted*; and will you now turn your backs upon your Enemy, when his *main* Strength is *spent*, and you have already *sustained* the most violent *Shocks* of his Power? If you had *retreated* at the first *Onset*, when your Sin was seated in its Dominion, and you were yet but *raising* your Forces, and *arming* your Resolution against it, it had been much more *excusable*; for then you had the *sharpest* part of your *Conflict* to undergo, being to contend with a *flusht* and a *victorious* Enemy, who having as yet all his Strength about him, could not fail to put your Courage to a mighty Trial; but *now* to retreat, when you are *past the worst*, and have gotten above *half way* thro', when you have *pulled down* your Lust from its Throne and Dominion, and so far *subdued* it to your Religion and your Reason, that you have henceforward no more to do but to *pursue a Victory*, which tho you got with a great deal of *Toil*, you may finish with a great deal of *Ease* and *Pleasure*; *now*, I say, to retreat in such a prosperous *Juncture*, and give up the blessed *Prize*, which you have been so long *contending* for, what *desperate Madness* is it! If you had never *begun* this Warfare, or yielded in the *first* Conflict of it, what a deal of *Pains* might you have *saved*? How many *Prayers* and *Tears*, *Strugglings* and *Contentions* with yourselves might you have *escaped* and *avoided*, and at last been in as *good* a Condition, if not a *better*, than that wherein your *Apostasy* will certainly leave you? And when a Man hath been so long taking Heaven by *Storm* and *Violence*, when he hath broken thro' so many *Oppositions* to come at it, and in despite of all the *Darts* of Temptation from *without*, and of all the *Weights* and *Pressures* of Inclination from *within*, he is gotten up, as it were, to the *Top* of the *Scaling-Ladder*, has laid his Hands on the *Battlements* of Heaven, and is ready to *leap in* and take *Possession* of the Joys of it, what a Madness is it for him now to *let go* his Hold and tumble *headlong* down again into that Abyss of Sin and Misery, out of which he had recovered himself with so much *Labour* and *Difficulty*! Especially considering,

IV. That by this our *Relapse* we shall not only forfeit the Fruit of our past Labour, but also render our *Recovery* more *hazardous* and *difficult* than ever. For what the Apostle pronounces concerning *Apostates* from *Christianity*, is in a great Measure applicable to those who having *engaged* in the Christian Warfare, *fall off* from it again to their old sinful Courses; *it is impossible*, i. e. *'tis extremely difficult, for those that were once enlighten'd, and have tasted of the Heavenly Gift, and were made Partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the Powers of the World to come; if they fall away, to renew them again to Repentance*, Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. For besides that, by *falling* from his first Repentance, a Man *grieves* and *chases* the Holy Spirit *from him*, without whose Aid he can neither *stand* when he is *up*, nor *recover* when he is *fallen*; and having *chased him away*, he cannot well expect that he will be so ready to *return* and *cooperate* with him after he hath treated him so *rudely by quenching* his Motions, *unravelling* his Workmanship, and *extinguishing* all those Heavenly Effects which his Grace had produced in his Soul. For how can this blessed *Assistant* of Souls but take it in great *Disdain* to be thus *mock'd* and *disappointed*, when he had been so industriously *labouring* for a Wretch's Good, to lift him out of the Mire wherein he was *sunk* and *perishing*; and when he had *succeeded* so far in his Labour as to help him *quite out*, and was *washing* and *cleansing* his polluted Spirit, and *dressing* it for the Embraces of the Father of Spirits, to see this Wretch *turn back* after all, and *plunge* himself headlong into the Mire again, how can he but *resent* such an ungrateful Disappointment of his Labour, with unspeakable *Grief* and Indignation;

dignation: And if, upon such *Resentment*, he *should*, as he justly *may*, wholly *retire* from him, and leave him *for ever* to wallow in his own Heart's Lust, his Condition will not be only *dangerous* but *desperate*. What the blessed Spirit *will* do, in this Case I cannot certainly determine, because he *may* do as he *pleases*, being totally *released* by the Sinner's Apostasy from all Obligation of *Promise*. But it makes my Heart *ake* to think, how much Reason there is to *fear*, that he will *utterly forsake* and *abandon* him, and not *throw away* any more of his Grace upon a Wretch, on whom he hath already spent so much to *no purpose*. And if the heinous *Affront* which the blessed Spirit receives by your *Apostasy*, should put him upon *this* Resolution, you are damn'd *above ground*, and *everlastingly* forsaken of all Hopes of Recovery. But besides all *this*, (which one would think should be sufficient to *startle* any sober Man from making such a desperate *Experiment*) by *falling off* from your Repentance, you must needs be supposed to offer a mighty *Violence* to your Consciences; which having been already *awaken'd* into a thorow Sense of your *past* Sins, must necessarily reflect upon your *present* Apostasy with unspeakable *Horror* and *Affrightment*; which if it doth not presently *scare* ye back again to Repentance, will put ye upon more *desperate* Courses than ever. For now if your Conscience won't be *quiet*, you have no other Remedy but to *ruffle* with it and *out-brave* its Horrors, by being more *couragiously* wicked: and as those barbarous Parents that sacrificed their Children to *Moloch*, were fain to make Noises round the burning Idol, with *Drums* and *Timbrels* to drown their dying *Shrieks* and *Groans*, lest they should move them to Compassion; so, when, by your *wilful Relapses*, you have *sacrificed* your Conscience to your Lust, and it begins to *shriek out* from among those Flames of Guilt whereinto you have cast it, you have no other Remedy, unless you repent *immediately*, but to make a *Tophet* round about it, and drown its *Outcries* in Excesses of Riot; to put yourselves into a *tumultuous Hurry* of Wickedness and Folly, that you may not hear those *ill-boding Shrieks* within; and to *sear* over the Wounds of your Conscience with a *thick* Custom of sinning, that they may neither *bleed* nor *smart*. So that, if once you turn *Recreant* to your Christian Warfare, you will be forced, in your own Defence, to plunge yourselves *deeper* into Sin than ever. For now you must sin, not only to *gratisy* your Lusts, but to *stupisy* your Conscience, and this last you can never do without being *excessively* wicked. You must now be *puny* Sinners no longer, if ever you intend to sin *quietly*, but resolve to turn *Heroes* in Iniquity, and *out-sin* your natural Sense of Good and Evil. In order whereunto you must give your wounded Spirit *Gash* after *Gash*, and *follow the Blow* till you have left it *past feeling*; you must *heap on* Loads of Guilt upon your Conscience, till, with the continued *Pressure* you have render'd it *callous* and *insensible*; and when, by this means, you have *sunk* yourselves *deeper* into Sin than ever (as you will, doubtless, *soon* do) how much more *difficult* and *hazardous* must your Recovery be? For now you will *need* much *more* Assistance than ever you did in your *first* Repentance, and have much *less* reason to *expect* it. So that tho I dare not say your Condition will be *desperate*; yet, I must tell ye, 'twill be so *fearfully dangerous*, that unless God, out of a *peculiar* Mercy to ye, *awake* ye by some *extraordinary* Providence, and at the same time *cooperate* with ye by an *extraordinary* Grace, you must certainly *miscarry* for ever.

V. Consider, that by your *deserting* of the Christian Warfare, you will not only render your *future* Recovery more difficult, but you will also plunge yourselves, *for the present*, into a far more *guilty* and *criminal* Condition than ever. For thus St. *Peter* determines in the Case, 2 *Pet.* ii. 20, 21. *If, after they have escaped the Pollutions of the World, thro' the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again intangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to*

have

have known the way of Righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment; that is, by *relapsing* into those sinful Pollutions out of which they had been *rescued* by the Belief and Knowledge of Christianity, they have rendered themselves much more *guilty*, than they were before when they were *Infidels*; so that if they had never been *acquainted* with the Gospel, nor taken *one* Step in the Paths of its holy Commandments, it had been much better for them, and God would have been much less *angry* and *displeased* with them. For by our *Apostasy* into a wicked Life, we do not only return back into as *bad*, at least, if not a *worse* Condition than ever; but,

First, We do also *make void* all those *Operations* of the Spirit of God, by which we were so *effectually* persuaded to *undertake*, and hitherto to *prosecute* the Christian Warfare. By *relapsing* into a State of Sin again, we wilfully *undo* all that he hath been *doing*, we *revive* those Lusts which he hath been *mortifying*, and *root up* those Graces which he hath been *planting* and *watering* within us; and when with great *Contrivance* and *Industry* he hath *drest* and *cultivated* our Nature, pluck'd up the *Weeds* of it, and planted it with the *Flowers* of Heaven, we wilfully *spoil* and *lay it waste* again, and turn his growing *Sharon* into a barren *Wilderness*. So that besides all that *Guilt* which arises from those sinful Courses whereinto we are *relaps'd*, we are now become guilty of the greatest *Outrage* to the Spirit of God; we are guilty of *destroying* the dearest Fruits of his Labour, of *laying waste* his Inclosures, *quenching* his Motions, *extinguishing* his Graces, and *strangling* all those Heavenly Effects which he by his powerful Goodness had *produced* in our Natures. And what a *black* Aggravation of our Guilt must it be, thus to *baffle* and *disappoint* the Spirit of God? But then,

Secondly; As by our *Apostasy* we offer the rudest *Affront* to the Holy Spirit, so we commit the greatest *Violence* both upon our *Conscience* and *Experience*. For in all *Apostasies* we sin with an *awakened* Conscience, with the *Convictions* of our Guilt *glaring* in our Eyes, and are fain to *contend* and *struggle* with our own Mind, before we can break thro' those *Checks* and *Restraints* it lays upon us, which must needs be a great *Aggravation* of our Guilt. For the more *Light* and *Persuasion* a Man sins against, the more of *Will* and *Malice* there is in his Sin, and consequently the more of *Guilt*. For what can be more *Malicious*, than for a Man to *dare* and *defy* his own Convictions, and *charge* into the very Mouth of them, while they are *spitting fire*, and *roaring* everlasting Ruin against him? This plainly shews him to be acted by a *desperate* Resolution, when for the sake of his Lusts he dares *confront* the *Terrors* of his Conscience, and rather than be *barred* the Enjoyment of them, he will plunge himself *headlong* into a *foreseen* Ruin, and *leap* after them into Hell with his *Eyes open*. And yet *thus* we do in all our *wilful Apostasies*; we sin against the *quickest* Sense of our Danger, the *loudest* Warnings of our Conscience, and the *clearest* Convictions of our Reason; which being all most *horrid* Aggravations, must needs *swell up* our Guilt to a *monstrous* Proportion. Neither do we sin only against our *Conscience*, but also against our *Experience*. For it is to be supposed that we have made some *Proof* and *Trial* of Religion, and having done so, we must needs be sensible that there is nothing in it but what is *reasonable*, and *practicable*, and highly for our *Good*, nothing but what tends to the *Tranquillity* of our Minds, the *Peace* of our Consciences, and the *Perfection* of our Natures; and being thorowly *assured* of all this, and that not so much by *Discourse* as by our *Sense* and *Experience*, what a horrid baseness would it be, if notwithstanding *this*, we should *renounce* and *desert* it? If we had never *tried* it, we might have urged our *Ignorance* or *Want* of *Experience* as an Apology for our *Refusal* to submit to it; we might have pretended, that for want of a more intimate *Acquaintance* with it, we look'd upon its Commands as *impossible*, or at least as very *difficult*

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and altogether *fruitless* and *ungrateful* to human Nature; and that if we had once *complied* with it, we must have presently *renounced* every thing that is *pleasant* and *desirable*, and from thenceforth have been contented to *sigh away* our Lives in *unsufferable* Severities, and a *melancholy* Retirement from all the *Joys* and *Festivities* of human Conversation: For such *frightful* Representations Men that are *unexperienced* in Religion are apt to make of it; which tho it be far from *justifying*, may in some Measure *extenuate* their Enmity to it. But you that have *tried* Religion, must needs have *experienced* that all this is *false*; that its Commands are easy *enough* to a *willing* Mind, and that the many *Advantages* they bring with them do abundantly *compensate* for their *Difficulty*; that they are so far from *barring* Men any *innocent* Pleasure, or Comfort of human Life, that they *purify* the pleasures of it, and render them more *grateful* and *generous*; that besides this, they bring mighty Pleasures of their *own along* with them, the pleasures of a *glorious* Hope, a *serene* Mind, a *calm* and *undisturbed* Conscience, which are such as do far *out-relish* the most *studied* and *artificial* Luxuries; all this you cannot but know, if you have made any considerable *Trial* of a *sober* and *well-advised* Religion. So that if *now* you *apostatize*, you will not only affront your *Conscience*, but your *Experience* too; and the *past* Sense you have had of the *Goodness* of Religion, will *rise up* in Judgment against ye, and for ever *silence* all the *Excuses* you can urge for yourselves, and leave ye nothing to say, but that you were *sick* of your *Ease*, and tired with the *Refreshments* of Religion. But then,

Thirdly, As your *Apostasy* will be a grievous Affront to the Spirit of God, and to your own Conscience and Experience, so 'twill be one of the *foulest Dishonours* that you can cast upon *Religion*. If you had never been *engaged* in the Christian Warfare, the *Honour* of Religion could never have been so nearly *touched* by your wicked Courses, and all considering Men would have attributed your *Enmity* to it, to your *Ignorance* and *want* of *Experience*, and never have thought the *worse* of it when they saw it so *contemptuously treated* by one that was never *acquainted* with it. But if *now* you revolt into wicked Courses, after you have made *Trial* of it, what will the World say? Look ye, here is one that hath made an *Experiment* of the Religion you so much *celebrate*, and which you *extol* and *cry up* for such a *pleasant* and *amiable* thing; if it *were* what you *pretend*, how comes it to pass that after so long *Trial* and *Experience* of it, this Man should now at last *renounce* and *forsake* it? Which is such an *Objection*, as can be no otherwise *solv'd* but by *demonstrating* the Man, whose Apostasy *started* it, to be *forsaken* and *abandoned* of his Reason. For if upon the *Trial* he hath made of Religion, he had experienced it to be that *good* and *grateful* thing it is *represented*, it is not to be imagined he would ever have *revolted* from it, had he been capable to *deliberate* of his own *Choices* and *Actions*. And how can they that are *Strangers* to Religion forbear *suspecting* the *Goodness* of it, when they see a Man, after *Trial*, and in his *right Senses*, declare by his Actions that Vice is *better* and more *eligible* than Virtue, and to behold the *Pleasures* of Sin *preferr'd* before the *Joys* and *Satisfactions* of Religion, by one that hath made a *thorow Experiment* of them both? So that by *Apostatizing* into *sinful* Courses after a thorow *Trial* of Religion, we take an effectual Course to *defame* and *scandalize* it, to render *it a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence* to those that have had but *little* or *no* Acquaintance with it; and if by our *Example* any should be *disheartned* either from *entering* into, or *proceeding* in the Christian Warfare, their Blood will be one Day required at *our Hands*, and so we shall raise a most *fearful* Cry upon ourselves, and have not only the Spirit of God and our own Conscience and Experience, but also the Blood of all those Souls who have *stumbled* at our Apostasy, lifting up their Cries together to the Tribunal of God for a *dire* and *speedy* Vengeance against us.

VI. Consider, If after you have made some *Progress* in Religion you *revolt* into sinful Courses, you will not only render yourselves for the *present* more guilty, but, as a Consequence of that, you will certainly expose yourselves, if you die before your *Recovery*, to a *deeper* and more *dreadful* Ruin. For this we may depend upon, that the Judge of all the World will do *righteously*, and consequently, that as on the one hand he will proportion his *Rewards* to our *Services*, so on the other he will measure his *Punishments* by our *Guilts* and *Demerits*; and if he thus proceed (as he most *certainly* will) how horrible is it to think of the black and dismal *Fate* that hangs over the Heads of *Apostates*, whose Guilt being *aggravated* by those *above-named* Circumstances to such a *prodigious* Bulk and Magnitude, must be supposed to draw after it a Punishment *proportionable*? And if so, then doubtless the Portion of *Apostates* among *wicked* and *miserable* Spirits will be the most *wretched* and *deplorable*. For besides those *supernumerary* Stripes they must expect to receive from God, as being Servants that have *known* their Master's Will, and *experienced* the Goodness of it, and yet have finally *refused* to *comply* with it; their Reflections on their own *Apostasy*, and the *Folly* and *Madness* of it, will doubtless *gall* and *torment* them a thousand Times more than all the other *Stings* of their Conscience together. For how must it *enrage* them against themselves, to *ruminate* on their own Follies, as they are *wandring* thro' the Infernal Shades? O *desperate* Creatures! from what *glorious* Hopes have we *precipitated* ourselves into this *dismal* State? We had once got a *fair* Way *onwards* to Heaven, and were arrived within *Sight* of its blessed *Shores*: we had *shaken off* our Lusts, *mastered* our Inclinations, and subdued our Wills to the Will of God; and in so doing had *conquered* the most *difficult* Part of our Voyage; we had weathered the *cross Winds* of Temptation from *without*, and *stemm'd* the *Tide* of corrupt Nature *within*; so that had we but bore up couragiously a *little farther*, we that are now *howling* among damned Ghosts, might have been *triumphing* with blessed Spirits. But O *abominable* Fools and Traitors to ourselves! after all the *successful* Pains we had taken to be *happy*, we have *shipwrack'd* our Souls at the *Mouth* of our *Harbour*, and to *gratify* a base Lust, have *leapt headlong* from the Brink of the *Rivers of Pleasure*, into this *Lake of Fire and Brimstone.* And have we *thus* undone ourselves, *thus* madly, *thus* without Pretence or Temptation! O *cursed* be our Folly, *cursed* be our Lusts, and *for ever cursed* be *we* for *harbouring* and *entertaining* them! Thus will these miserable People *incessantly rave* against themselves, and with *dire* Reflections on their *desperate* Follies for ever *enrage* and *multiply* their own Torments. So that were I *descending* to the bottomless Pit, and had but *so much* Time before I came there, as to make *one* Prayer more in my own Behalf, *next* to that of being *wholly delivered* thence, I know none I should *sooner* pitch upon, than *this*, *O Lord deliver me from that Portion of Hell, which thou hast reserved for Apostates.*

So that if now, that we have so far *engaged* ourselves in the Christian Warfare, we should be so mad as to *retreat* into our own sinful Courses, it had been a thousand Times *better* for us that we had never engaged in it *at all*. For unless we repent of our *Retreat*, and *come on* again, we have taken a great deal of *Pains* in Religion to no *other* Purpose, but only *to treasure up to ourselves Wrath against the Day of Wrath*, and *heat* the *Furnace* of our future Torments yet *seven Times hotter*. Wherefore since the Matter is now reduced to this Issue, that if we *revolt* from our *Christian Warfare*, we shall not only *defeat* our selves of all the Fruit of our *past* Labour and Contentions, but also *enhance* our *future* Punishment; so that we must either resolve to *win Heaven* by our *Perseverance*, or *sink ourselves* into the nethermost Hell by our *Apostasy*; let us pull *up* our Courage and maugre all Temptations to the contrary, continue *stedfast* and *immoveable* in our Christian Resolution, remembring what the *Captain of our Salvation* hath promised, *Rev.* iii. 21. *To him that overcomes, will I grant to sit with me in my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am sat down with my Father in his Throne.*

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Containing some short Directions *for the more profitable reading the preceding Discourse, and also for the Conduct and regular Exercise of our* Closet Religion *in all the different States of the* Christian Life; *together with* Forms *of* Private Devotion *fitted to each State.*

IN the foregoing Chapter I have endeavoured a full Account of all those *Instrumental Duties* of Christianity, by which we are to *acquire*, *improve*, and *perfect* the principal Virtues of it, in the Perfection of which Virtues, *Heaven*, which is the great *End* of Christianity, consists. And for the more distinct management thereof, I considered Men under a threefold State; First, as *entering* into the Christian Life; Secondly, as *actually engaged* in the Course of it; Thirdly, as *improving* towards Perfection by Perseverance in it; and gave a distinct Account of all those Instrumental Duties that are proper to *each* of these States. And now that what hath been said in that and the preceding Chapters may have its due Effect upon the *Reader*'s Mind, I have thought fit to reduce it to Practice, by directing Men,

First, How to *read* and *apply* the several Parts of it to their own particular States.

Secondly, By furnishing them with some short *Rules*, for the more profitable Exercise of their *Private Religion* in each of those different States, together with *Forms* of *Private Devotion*, fitted to each State.

I. As to the first of these, it is to be considered, that to the making Men *sincere* and *hearty* Christians, it is highly necessary that they should have a right Understanding, First, of the Nature of the great and chief *End* which Christianity proposes to them; Secondly, of the *Means*, by which that End is to be obtained; Thirdly, of the natural Tendency of all the *Virtues* of Christianity towards this *blessed End*, and of the contrary Tendency of the opposite *Vices* towards their *eternal Misery* and *Ruin*. Of all which I have endeavoured to give an Account in the *Three First Chapters* of this Book. Wherefore I would advise the Reader,

1. *Carefully* and *seriously* to peruse those Chapters, wherein (because I have been sometimes forced by the *sublimity* of my Argument, to discourse a little more *abstrusely* than in any of the following Parts) it will be necessary for him to imploy more of his *Thoughts* and *Considerations*, and not to content himself with a *slight* and *cursory* Perusal. And when, by a serious Consideration of what hath been there discoursed, his Mind is fully convinced what a kind of *Heaven* he is to expect hereafter, what kinds of *Means* are necessary to obtain it, how naturally all the *Virtues* of Religion do *raise up* Mens Souls to *Heaven*, and how all the contrary *Vices* do as naturally *sink* and *press* them down to *Hell*, it is to be hoped he will be fully persuaded of the indispensible Necessity of *entering* into the *Christian Life*; which if he be, I would advise him,

2. *Seriously* to read over and consider the *First* and *Second* Sections of the *Fourth* Chapter, wherein are contained the several Duties which are proper to his State of *Entrance* into the *Christian Life*, and also proper *Arguments* and *Motives* to engage him to the Practice of them; which if he would

read to good Effect, he must by no means content himself with a *single Perusal*, but read them over at least *once a Week* whilst he continues in that State, till he fully comprehends the *Meaning* and Use of all those *Duties*, and the *Force* and *Cogency* of those *Arguments*; which if he do, it is to be hoped he will, at last, be reduced to a *thorow-* and *well-weighed* Resolution of *forsaking* his Sins, and *actually engaging* in the Christian Life. Which being done, I would advise him,

3. With the same Care and Fervency, to peruse the *Third* and *Fourth* Sections of the *Fourth* Chapter, wherein are contained all the several Duties proper to this Second State of *actual Engagement* in the *Christian Life*, as also sundry *Arguments* or *Motives* to press and inforce them; and when, by the Assistance of these Duties he hath continued for some time *faithful* and *constant* to his good Resolution,

4. Together with the *Third* and *Fourth* Section, let him often peruse and consider the *Fifth* and *Sixth*, wherein are contained the Duties appertaining to the Third State of *Improvement* and *Preservation* in the *Christian Life*, together with some *Considerations* to inforce the Practice of them. All which I would earnestly persuade the pious Reader to read and consider over and over again, till his Mind is fully instructed in the *Nature* and *Use* of each *Duty*, and hath thorowly digested the *Force* and *Evidence* of every *Argument*. And this may suffice for the first thing proposed, concerning the profitable Method of *reading* this practical Treatise.

II. As for the Second Part of it, which is that which I mainly design in this Chapter, *viz.* the *Rules* and *Directions* for the *private* Exercise of our Religion, in each State of the *Christian Life*, together with the *Forms* of *Private Prayer*, fitted for each, take them in their following Order.

DIRECTIONS *for the more profitable Exercise of our* Private Religion *in the State of our* Entrance *into the* Christian Life.

In the Morning, *before you go into the World, enter into your Closet, and there consider with yourself a while the miserable State you have reduced yourself to by your past sinful Courses, the absolute Necessity of your forsaking them, and the possibility of your Recovery, if you heartily endeavour it; and then address yourself to God in this following* PRAYER.

O Most Glorious and Eternal God, Thou art the Fountain of Beings, the Father of Angels and Men, the Righteous and Almighty Governor of Heaven and Earth, from Thy Throne Thou beholdest all the Children of Men, and their most secret Actions are open and naked to thy All-seeing Eye; and such is the Purity of Thy Nature, that Thou lovest Righteousness and hatest Iniquity wheresoever Thou beholdest it; with what Face can I, a most miserable polluted Wretch, appear in thy Presence, who, by the past course of my Wickedness and Rebellion against Thee, have not only rendred myself guilty and justly obnoxious to thy eternal Displeasure, but have also contracted such obstinate Dispositions and Inclinations to sin on, as, without thy Grace and Assistance, I shall never be able to conquer! O desperate, vile, and ungrateful Wretch that I have been! I have renounced the God of my Being, and the Fountain of my Mercies; I have despised Thy Goodness, trampled upon Thy Authority, mock'd and abused Thy Patience and Long-suffering, and, in particular, I must confess, to my own Shame and Confusion, I have been wofully

guilty

guilty of *. And now by these my manifold Abominations, I have utterly undone myself, unless thou take pity upon me. I confess I have forfeited my Soul into thy Hands, and if thou so pleasest, thou mayest justly cast me away from thy Presence, and make me a dire Example of thy Vengeance for ever. But, I know, O Lord, that thou desirest not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he should repent and live, and upon the Propitiation of thine own Son's Blood Thou hast declared Thyself willing to receive returning Prodigals, and to be heartily reconciled to them, notwithstanding all their past Provocations. O that I could return, that I could but shake off those corrupt Inclinations which detain my wretched Soul in Captivity! I am willing to contribute towards it whatsoever I am able; but, alas! without Thee all that I can do, will be utterly ineffectual. Wherefore, for Thy tender Mercy's sake, for thy dear Son's and my Saviour's sake, have pity upon a miserable Wretch, that, without Thy helping hand, is lost for ever. And, since Thou hast given me Thy Gospel as an outward means to save and recover me, O do Thou enable me, by Thy blessed Spirit, heartily to believe, and thorowly to consider it. For which end, I beseech Thee to remove all sinful Prejudices from my Mind, that so I may impartially weigh those Evidences Thou hast given me of the Truth of it; and do thou suggest them to my Mind with such a clear and convincing Light, as that they may at last conquer my Infidelity, and beget in me a firm and lively Faith. And forasmuch as my Mind is vain and roving, and utterly averse to all serious Considerations, O do Thou, who art the Father of Spirits, and canst turn the Hearts of Men which way Thou pleasest, inspire good Thoughts into me, and imprint them upon me with such a Power and Efficacy, as that my wandring Mind may be reduced by them to a thorow Consideration, and my stubborn Will to a firm Resolution of Amendment. Particularly, I beseech Thee to give me a right Understanding of the urgent need I have of a Saviour, and of all those Things which he hath done and suffered, and is still doing at thy right hand, in order to the cleansing my guilty and polluted Nature, and restoring me to thy Grace and Favour; that so hereby I may be fully convinced how odious my Sins are in thy sight, how base and vile they have rendred me, and at what a mighty Distance they have set me from Thee, and that, being convinced of this, I may put on a holy Shame and Confusion, and abhor myself in Dust and Ashes before thee. Thou knowest, O Lord, it is not in my Power to soften this hard and unrelenting Heart, and affect it with that Godly Sorrow which is requisite to work a true Repentance. O do Thou smite it with such a sharp and piercing sense of my Sins, as may cause the Floods of unfeigned Grief and Contrition to gush forth from it. Cause me to bleed for my Sins now, that I may not bleed for them for ever; and that having felt the smart and anguish of them, I may utterly detest and abhor them, and never be reconciled to them more. Thus do Thou assist me, O good God, in the exercise of all these Duties, till thou hast thorowly conquered my Will by them, and prepared it for a firm Resolution to forsake all Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, and to live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly, in this present World. And now that I am going into the World among those very Temptations that have hitherto so miserably captivated and enslaved me, O let Thy Blessed Spirit be present with me, to keep my drowsy Conscience awake, and arm me against them with His Holy Inspirations, that so those good Thoughts and Desires which Thou hast at present excited in me, may stick fast upon my Soul, in the midst of my worldly Occasions, and never cease importuning my Conscience, Will, and Affections, till they have produced in me the happy Effects of a serious and hearty

* *Here make a particular Confession of all those sinful Courses you have lived in, together with all their aggravating Circumstances of Impudence, Obstinacy and Ingratitude, &c.*

hearty Repentance. All which I most earnestly beseech of Thee, even for pity sake, to a poor perishing Soul, and for Jesus Christ his sake, in whose Name and Words I farther Pray,

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

In the Evening, *when you find your self most fit for serious Thoughts, go into your Closet again, and consider coolly with yourself, whether you are heartily willing to part with every Sin, and particularly with your beloved Sin, and to submit to every Duty, and even to those that are most contrary to your vicious Inclination; if you are not (as it's very probable you will not for some Time) or if you find the least reason to suspect you are not, press yourself anew with such Divine Reasons as are most apt to affect you with the Hope of Heaven, and the Fear of Hell, with the Love of God and of your Saviour; represent your Obstinacy to yourself, with all its Baseness and Disingenuity, Madness and Folly, till you find yourself affected with a sorrowful sense of it, and then offer up this following* Prayer.

O Father of Mercies, and God of all Grace and Consolation, who art a ready help in Time of Need, look down upon me, I beseech Thee, a miserable and forlorn Wretch, that have wilfully sold myself Captive to the Devil, and am now struggling to get loose from this my wretched Bondage into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God. I know, O Lord, that I am striving for my immortal Life, and accordingly as I succeed, I expect to be happy or miserable for ever. I have seriously considered the Reasons on both Sides, and am fully satisfied in my Mind, that there is infinitely more Force in Thy Promises and Threats, than in all the Difficulties of my Duty and the Pleasures of my Sin. But after all this, I find a Law in my Members, warring against the Law in my Mind, a perverse Will that rejects the Counsels of my Reason, that makes obstinate Reservations of some beloved Sins, and Exceptions to some particular Duties, in despite of all the persuasion of my Reason and Religion. So that, after all my Endeavour, I am still detained in Captivity to the Law of Sin that is in my Members, and am not able to incline myself to an intire Resolution of Amendment. O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from this Body of Sin and Death! I know, O Lord, tho I am weak and impotent, and of myself unable to shake off the Chains and Fetters of my Lusts, yet Thy Grace is abundantly sufficient to rescue and deliver me from them; and Thou hast promised to assist with it my honest Endeavours, and crown them with a blessed Success. Wherefore, for Thy Truth and Mercy's sake, suffer not Thy poor Creature, who, with pitiful and bemoaning Looks, cries out for help to Thee, to spend himself in weary and fruitless strugglings against this violent Torrent of my sinful Nature, which without Thy Aid, will quicky overcome my poor Endeavours, and drive me down into eternal perdition. My sole Dependence is upon Thee, my Hope of Success is wholly in Thee; help, Lord, help, or else I perish; stretch forth Thy powerful Arm to my sinking Soul, and let not this Deep swallow me up; but do Thou so quicken my faint Endeavours, so strengthen my weak and doubting Faith, so enliven my cold and languid Considerations, so clear up my Convictions of my Need of a Saviour, and of the Danger and Odiousness of my Sins, and thereby so increase my penitential Sorrows and Remorses, as that by all these Means together my obstinate Will may at last be conquered, and effectually persuaded to part with every Sin, be it never so dear to me, and to comply with every Duty, be it never so cross to my vile Inclination. Then shall I freely resign up myself unto Thee, and with a firm Resolution devote all my Powers to thy Service. And that I may do so, and

and by so doing be reconciled to Thee, O my offended God, before I go hence and be no more seen: Receive me, I beseech Thee, into Thy Protection this Night, that I may yet see the Light of another Day, and have a longer space to finish my Repentance. All which I humbly implore even for Jesus Christ's sake, in whose Name and Words I farther Pray,

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

If upon searching your own Heart, you find, that after you have fairly represented to yourself what sinful Pleasures you must part with, what Duties you must submit to, and what Difficulties you must engage with, you are willing, without any Reserve or Exception, to submit yourself to God, beware you be not too hasty to form your Resolution, *but take some little time to try yourself; see whether you will continue to Morrow of the same Mind you are in now, and if then you perceive you have reason to suspect yourself, try a little longer, and at the present endeavour as much as in you lies to confirm and settle yourself in the good Mind you are in, by pressing and urging yourself with all those Arguments of your Religion by which you have been thus far convinced and persuaded; and while you are thus trying yourself, instead of the former, let this be your* Evening Prayer.

O Blessed Lord, and most Merciful Father, thou art a God hearing Prayer, and to Thee shall all Flesh come; I admire thy Goodness, I adore thy Grace, that after so many heinous Provocations I have given Thee, for which thou mightest have justly shut thine Ears against me for ever, thou hast heard my Cries, and pitied my Misery, and thus far contributed towards my Recovery. I acknowledge 'tis by thy Grace that I am what I am, that this stubborn Heart begins at last to relent, this perverse Will to bow and stoop, these lewd Affections to hunger and thirst after Righteousness; that now at last my foolish Soul is persuaded to part with those Sins which are its Plagues and Infelicities, and to embrace those blessed Duties by which thou hast designed to raise me to immortal Glory. By these good Beginnings thou hast given me some Reason to hope for a happy Success upon my poor Endeavours. Praised be thy Grace, I am at present heartily willing to be thine, and were I but sure to continue thus minded and disposed, I would immediately make over my Heart and Will to Thee by the most solemn Engagement. But, O Lord, I am afraid of my self, I dread my own Inconstancy, and thou knowest I have too much Reason for it. I have mocked Thee too often already with my deceitful Promises and Engagements; I have sinn'd and then promised Amendment, I have promised Amendment and then sinn'd again, as if all that I meant by my Promises, were only to ask leave of Thee to sin against Thee anew: and now after so many Falsifications I would not for all the World deal treacherously with Thee any more; wherefore before I solemnly resign and devote myself to Thee by a new Purpose and Engagement, I desire to make some farther Trial of my own Stedfastness, to see whether this present Inclination of my Will be the effect of Passion or a settled Judgment. In the mean time therefore, I do most humbly beseech Thee, to be present with me in all my Ways, and continually to influence my Mind with thy Grace and Spirit; to strengthen my Faith, to fix my Consideration, to persuade my Will, and feed and cherish these my holy Desires with good Thoughts and Inspirations, that so I may remain stedfast and immoveable, and no Temptation whatsoever may be able to alter the Temper of my Mind, or divert it from its good Inclination; and that having had a sufficient Experience of the fixed Disposition of my Soul to obey Thee, I may

devote myself to Thee with a chearful Heart, and an assured Hope of my own Sincerity and Constancy. O Lord hear and help me for thy Mercies sake, and for Jesus Christ his sake, in whose most perfect Form of Prayer I farther Pray,

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

If after a sufficient Trial of yourself, you find you are constantly inclined to submit to God, to part with every Sin, and comply with every Duty, consider, that now it is high Time for you to devote yourself to God, and what abundant Reason you have for it, and what a powerful Obligation you must lay upon yourself by so doing: and when you have seriously considered these Things, give up yourself to God in this following Form of Prayer; *which for the greater* Sanction *and more awful* Solemnity *of your good Resolution, you would do well to repeat at the next* Sacrament.

O Most Merciful Father, so infinite is the Goodness of thy Nature, that thou art always ready to pity and relieve the Poor and Needy, and to extend thy timely Succours to us helpless Sinners whensoever we cry unto thee. Of the truth whereof thou hast given me, who am the vilest of Sinners, a most sensible Proof and Experiment. For not long ago I was so dead in Trespasses and Sins, that hadst not thou took pity upon me, and quickened me by thy Grace, I had died for ever; my Understanding was so blind that I saw not my Danger; my Conscience so sear'd that I felt not my Guilt; my Will so inslaved to my Lusts that I could not endure to think of parting with them; but now, blessed be thy Grace which first excited my *Endeavours*, and hath hitherto prospered them, I do not only see the danger my Sins have exposed me to, and sensibly feel the Guilt of them, but am freely willing to renounce them for ever, and to part even with those darling Lusts that have heretofore been as dear to me as my right Eye. And now, O Lord, I am come before thee, and I hope with a true loyal and sincere Heart, to offer up my Soul and Body to thee, and vow an everlasting Obedience to thy blessed Will. For Jesus sake refuse not this poor Oblation, which tho it be infinitely unworthy of thine Acceptance, is the best thing I am able to present thee. To thee, O glorious Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I do from henceforth eternally devote myself and all my Faculties [* *And here at the Table of my blessed Saviour, and upon these Sacred Memorials of his Wounds and Blood*] I utterly abjure all known and wilful Sins and Rebellions, and particularly all such as have been heretofore most dear to me; faithfully promising by thy gracious Assistance from henceforth to observe thy Law without any Reserve or Exception. This in the Sincerity of my Soul I do here vow to thy Divine Majesty, and however I may be hereafter tempted, I will never wilfully depart from it, or from any Part of it, so help me, O my God, for Jesus Christ his sake, in whose own Words I farther Pray,

* *When you renew your Vow in the Sacrament, add,*

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

DIRECTIONS

DIRECTIONS *for the more profitable Exercise of our* Private Religion, *in the State of our* actual Engagement *in the* Christian Life.

When you go into your Closet in the Morning, *consider seriously with yourself the solemn Engagement you lie under; what a crying Guilt it would be to violate it; what Madness and Folly to recede from it, after you have taken so much Pains to reduce yourself to it; what mighty Reasons you have to persist in it, and what powerful Assistance is promised you, if you be not wanting to yourself; and then offer up this following* PRAYER.

O Eternal God, who art the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and dost thro' him bestow so many good and perfect Gifts upon thy Creatures, I desire for ever to remember and adore thy Goodness towards me, whom thou hast snatched as a Firebrand out of the Fire, and at length reduced to a serious purpose of Amendment after a long and obstinate course of Disobedience, in which if I had still persisted, I must have perished everlastingly. O blessed be thy great Name, that after so many Years Rebellion against Thee, for which I have long ago deserved to be banished into utter Darkness, I do yet behold the Light of another Day, and am allowed a farther space to repent and execute my purpose of Amendment. And now, O Lord, as thou hast wrought my Will into a good Resolution, in despight of all the corrupt Inclinations of my Nature, leave not, I beseech Thee, thy Workmanship unfinished, but by the mighty Operation of thy Grace, excite and enable me faithfully to perform what I have so seriously resolved. It is a mighty Work that I have undertaken, to cleanse a base polluted Nature, and root up all its filthy Lusts and Affections, and plant it with all the heavenly Dispositions, and improve them into everlasting Happiness; and thou know'st what strong Oppositions will be made against me, and with what powerful Temptations I must struggle thro'out the whole Course of my future Endeavour. So that unless thou wilt still go along with me, and still quicken and animate me by thy blessed Spirit, my Work is so great, and my Strength so little, that it will be in vain for me to proceed any farther. These importunate Temptations that surround me, will quickly conquer my present Resolution, and I shall do, as I have too often done already, resolve and sin, and sin and resolve, and so increase my Guilt by the Treachery of my Vows and Engagements. Wherefore for Jesus Christ (his sake, withdraw not thyself from me, but continue to assist my weak Endeavours by thy powerful Grace, till thou hast crown'd them with a perfect Victory. For which End, I beseech Thee, inspire me more and more with Patience and Constancy of Mind, that I may stand fast in my good Resolution, in despight of all Temptations to the contrary. Suggest to my Mind those holy Examples thou hast set before me, especially that of my blessed Saviour, and incline my Heart to copy and imitate them. Direct me to some wise and faithful Guide that may be willing, and able to assist me in all my Spiritual Necessities; and by frequently exciting me to dedicate my Actions to Thee, thou dost purify my Intentions from sinful and from carnal Aims, that so I may always live to thy Glory. And since thou art present with me where-ever I am, and dost always behold me whatsoever I am doing; O do thou inspire me with such a strong continual and actual Sense of it, as may be a constant Check to sinful Inclinations, and render me afraid of offending Thee. Let Thy blessed Spirit be my constant Monitor, to put me in mind to consider my Ways, and frequently to examine my Actions, that so whenever I go astray, I may be immediately

diately convinced of it, and by my speedy Repentance recover myself before I have wandered too far from my Duty. And grant, I beseech Thee, that the sense of my past Failings may still render me more watchful and circumspect for the future; that whensoever I have been carelesly or wilfully faulty, I may from thenceforth be more cautious of my Actions, and more vigilant against the Temptations that betrayed me. And that I may not run myself unnecessarily into Temptation for the future, preserve me, O Lord, from Sloth and Idleness, and from intermeddling with Matters that do not belong to me; and do thou still put me in mind to do my own Business, and to be faithful and diligent in the State and Calling wherein thou hast placed me. And that I may always serve thee with Freedom and Alacrity, remove from me, I beseech thee, all unprofitable Sadness and Melancholy, and help me to acquire an equal Tranquillity of Mind, and a becoming Chearfulness of Spirit. For which end, Good Lord, do thou inspire me with a lively Sense, and earnest Expectation of that blissful State towards which I am travelling; that having this glorious Prospect always in my Eye, I may go on with Joy and Triumph over all the Difficulties and Temptations that oppose me. And that by all these Means I may be more and more strengthened and confirmed in the good Resolution I have made, do thou stir up my slothful Mind to a diligent Attendance on thy publick Ordinances, that so, in the solemn Assemblies of thy Saints, I may constantly hear thy Word with Reverence and Attention, offer up my Prayers with Fervency and Devotion, and approach thy Table with all that Humility and Love, Gratitude and Resignation of Soul that becomes this solemn Remembrance and Representation of my dying Saviour. In these Things, and whatsoever else is needful to secure my Resolution of Obedience, assist me, O Lord, for Jesus Christ his sake, to whom with thy self and eternal Spirit, be render'd all Honour, Glory and Power, from this Time forth for evermore.

After this Prayer bethink yourself a little, what Temptations you are like to meet with in the ensuing Business of the Day, and briefly recollect those powerful Arguments which the Gospel urges to fortify you against them, and apply them particularly to the Sin or Sins you are most inclined to, and then renew your Resolution to God in the following PRAYER.

O God, who art my Hope and Strength, upon whose Aid and Assistance I depend, look down, I beseech thee, upon a poor helpless Creature, who am going forth into a busy World, that is full of Snares and Temptations. Blessed be thy Name, my Heart continues still resolved upon a thorow Course of Amendment; and therefore, here in thy dreadful Presence, I do again most solemnly promise and engage myself, that whatsoever Temptations I meet with this Day, I will not wilfully commit any Sin, no not the Sin I am most inclined to; nor omit any Duty, how contrary soever it may be to my Nature; and that I will faithfully endeavour to keep such a constant Guard upon myself, as that I may not be surprized and overtaken thro' my own Inadvertence and Unwariness. But this, O Lord, I promise not out of any Confidence in my own Strength, but in Dependence upon thee, and in Hope, that out of thy tender Pity to a poor impotent Wretch, thou wilt not be wanting to me in any necessary Assistance, but that either thou wilt remove from me all great and importunate Temptations, or enable me, by thy Grace, to repel and vanquish them; and this I do most earnestly beseech, in the Name and Mediation of Jesus Christ, with whose Prayer I conclude this my Morning Sacrifice.

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

In

In the Evening *when you find yourself best disposed for religious Exercise, set apart such Portions of your Time, as you can conveniently spare, from your necessary Refreshment and Diversion, to call yourself to Account concerning the Actions of the Day; and enquire whether they have been agreeable to your Morning Promise and Resolution: and upon Enquiry, you will find either that you have faithfully discharged what you promised, or that you have sinned* unawares, *or thro'* Carelessness *and* Self-neglect, *or that you have sinned* wilfully, *and against your own* Conscience.

If upon Enquiry it appear that you have been faithful *to your Morning Engagement, represent to yourself the great Reason you have to rejoice in it, and to praise God for it, and then offer up this following* Thanksgiving.

BLessed be thy Name, O most gracious and merciful Father, for those great and numberless Favours, which from time to time thou hast heaped upon me, who am less than the least of all thy Mercies; particularly for the signal Mercies of this Day, for that thou hast not shut thine Ears against my Prayers, nor withdrawn thy self from me, but hast accompanied me with thy Grace thro' all those Snares and Temptations to which I have been exposed. Praised be thy Name, that thou hast not suffered me to be tempted above what I was able, that thou hast so powerfully assisted me against those Temptations I have been engaged with, and by putting so many good Thoughts into my Mind, hast strengthened my Resolution, and rendered it so successful and victorious. 'Tis to thy Grace that I owe all the Good I have done, and 'tis by thy Aid that I have escaped all the Evils I have been tempted to; wherefore not unto me, O Lord, not unto my Strength or Endeavours, but unto thy name be all the Glory and Praise of this Day's Deliverance and Preservation. O never let the Remembrance of this thy Goodness towards me depart from my Mind, but let it kindle in me such a grateful Sense, as may more and more incite me to love and obey Thee, and depend upon Thee for the future. And as thou hast been pleased to conduct me safely by thy Grace, thro' all the Dangers and Temptations of the Day, so do thou take me into thy Care and Protection this Night, and grant that I may awake in the Morning with a Heart so inflamed with the Remembrance of thy Goodness, and so encouraged with this Day's Success, and so endeared to the Practice of Virtue, by the growing Delights and Pleasures of it, as that I may persist in my religious Course with greater Courage and Alacrity; and this I humbly beg for Jesus Christ's sake, in whose Name and Words I farther Pray;

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

If upon Enquiry you find that you have been failing in your Duty, or that you have done any evil Action thro' meer Heedlessness *or* Surprize, *endeavour to affect yourself with a sorrowful Sense of your own Folly, Weakness, and Carelessness, and then conclude with this* Form of Humiliation.

O Most blessed Lord God, who art infinitely glorious in thy own Righteousness and Holiness, and dost for ever will and act according to thy own Nature, which is the most perfect Law and Pattern of Goodness. To thy spotless Nature no evil can approach, who art of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity; with what Confidence then can such a polluted Creature as I am appear in thy Presence; how can I lift up my guilty Eyes to thy Throne, who, to my past Rebellions, which have been more in Number than the Hairs on my Head, have this Day added so many sinful Failings and

Defects, that, shouldst thou be severe to mark what I do amiss, were sufficient to kindle thy Displeasure against me! 'Twas but this Morning that I engaged myself to thee, not only to abstain from all wilful and deliberate Sins, but also to set a Watch upon my Mouth and Actions, that I might not offend thee unawares; but to my Shame, I must acknowledge, I have been wofully careless and remiss, having this Day suffered myself, thro' my own Inadvertency, to be surpriz'd into such Actions, as nothing can render pitiable or excusable in thy Sight, but the miserable Frailty and Weakness of my Nature. What shall I say unto thee, O thou Judge of all the Earth! I am guilty, I am guilty, and have nothing to plead for myself but the Blood of Jesus, that all-sufficient Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World. O Lord, I do earnestly repent, and am heartily sorry for these my Misdoings, the Remembrace of them is grievous unto me,, the Burden of them is intolerable; have Mercy upon me, have Mercy upon me, most merciful Father, and for Jesus Christ his sake, forgive me all that is past, and grant that the Sense of these my Miscarriages may render me more careful and vigilant for the future. And let thy blessed Spirit be always present with my Mind, to recollect my Distractions, and awake my Considerations, and warn me of my Dangers, that I may no more be surprized by sudden Temptations, nor hurried into evil Actions by unexpected Hopes or Fears; but do thou so subdue my lower Appetites to my Will, my Will to my Understanding, and my Understanding to thy Spirit, as that under his blessed Conduct, I may, for the future, be prepared against all Temptations, and furnished to every good Work. And now, O Lord, let not the Failings I have been guilty of this Day, deprive me of thy gracious Protection this Night, but grant, that after a safe and comfortable Repose, I may awake in the Morning with such a sorrowful Sense of them, as may for the future, oblige me to be more watchful and resolute against them. All which I beg for Jesus Christ his sake, with whose Prayer I conclude this my Evening Sacrifice.

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

If upon Enquiry it appear that you have committed any wilful, deliberate *Sin, endeavour to affect yourself with Horror, Shame and Compunction for it, by representing to your Conscience the monstrous Foulness and Ingratitude, the deep Malignity and desperate Madness of your own Action, and then conclude with this* Form of particular Repentance.

O Thou most dreadful Majesty of Heaven and Earth who hatest Iniquity, and hast proclaimed from Heaven thy fierce Indignation against all Unrighteousness and Ungodliness of Men, look down, I beseech thee, upon me, a vile and guilty Wretch, who stand here arraigned at thy Tribunal by my own Conscience, and am so confounded with the Sense of my Sin, and of thy just Displeasure against me, that I tremble to draw near unto thee, and yet I dare not stay from thee. I acknowledge myself unworthy, infinitely unworthy, to come before thee, and am prompted by my own Horror and Shame to hide myself from thee, but yet I know I must come, or I must perish. And therefore here, O Lord, I cast myself at thy Feet and if thou shalt think meet to tread upon me, and to spurn me from thy Presence for ever, I must own that thou art just and righteous in all thy Ways. For thou hast been wonderfully good beyond what I could modestly have wish'd, or am able to express; thou tookest Pity upon me when I was all wounded and polluted, and weltring in my Blood, when I was sleeping securely upon the Brink of Perdition, and had scarce any Sense or Feeling of my Guilt and Misery; in this woful Plight didst thou visit my poor Soul, and

and with thy preventing Grace awake me to a Sense of my Danger, and effectually warn me to flee from that Wrath to come. And now when thou hadst brought me to myself, and to a thorow Resolution of Amendment, and my Soul was in a fair way of Recovery, like an ungrateful Wretch as I am, I have flown in the Face of my Physician, I have abused his Goodness, and baffled his Grace, and wilfully and deliberately torn open my Wounds again. And this I have done most treacherously, as well as ungratefully, not only against all the Obligations of Thy Goodness, but also against my own repeated Vows and Engagements: For 'twas but this Morning that I solemnly renewed to Thee my Promise of Obedience, and therein vowed not to offend Thee wilfully upon any Temptation whatsoever; but O vile Traitor that I am, both to Thee and to my own Soul, I have by * most basely falsified this my Engagement; and this I did with the most unpardonable Circumstance, even against the Dissuasions of thy Grace, the Checks of my Conscience, and the fairest Warnings of my Danger. Had I done it ignorantly, or unawares, or under a Surprize, it had been pitiable; but, O my Guilt, my Guilt, 'twas knowingly, wilfully, basely, and maliciously that I did this Evil in thy Sight; whereby I have forfeited my Soul, my Innocence, and Thy Love, and have got nothing in exchange but the Pleasure of a Minute, and a lasting Shame and Repentance. O vile Wretch, O desperate Fool that I am, what have I done! whither am I fallen! I have grieved thy Spirit, contemned thy Authority, trampled on thy Goodness, and wounded my own Conscience, and by one base Act have thrown myself head-long from all those glorious Hopes whereunto thou hadst raised me. And now, O God, what can I say in my own Behalf, my Sin being so great, my Folly so utterly inexcusable! O I am ashamed, I am ashamed of myself, I lament and abhor the Madness and Wickedness of my own Choice; and O that it were in my Power to recall it! But wo is me, it is past into an Act, and by that Act my Innocence is already stained, my Soul forfeited, and it is no more in my Power to undo what I have done, than to recall the Hours of Yesterday. What then shall I do, or whither shall I turn myself! 'Tis against thee, O Lord, against thee I have sinned, and now I have none but thee to flee to, I have nothing of my own to plead in my own Behalf, my Conscience condemns me, and my Sin, my Sin, cries aloud against me; so that unless thou wilt be pleased to listen to the interceeding Blood of thy Son, and to consult thine own Bowels and Compassions, and from thence to fetch Arguments of Mercy, I am undone for ever by my own Folly. Wherefore for Jesus Christ his sake, for thy own Goodness and Mercy's sake, have Pity, have Pity upon me, heal my Soul, for I have sinned against thee; be merciful to my Sin, for it is great. Thou hast promised to receive returning Sinners, to blot out their Iniquities, and to heal their Backslidings. I desire, O Lord, to return unto thee, I hate and renounce my Sin, and do here abhor myself in Dust and Ashes before thee. Wherefore for thy Pity's sake, O try me this once more, and do not presently cast me away from thy Presence, nor take thy Holy Spirit from me, but restrain me, by his Grace, from all presumptuous Sins, and suffer them not to have Dominion over me. And quicken me, O Lord, for thy Name's sake, that for the future I may watch more carefully, resist more vigorously, and walk more circumspectly than I have hitherto done: and that from henceforth I may be intirely devoted to thee, and serve thee without Interruption, do thou so confirm me by thy Grace in my holy Resolution, as that I may choose rather to die than to offend thee any more. And now, O Lord, tho by my Rebellion against thee this Day, I have rendered myself most unworthy of thy fatherly Care and Protection, yet I beseech thee to watch over me this Night for good, and give me a safe Repose in the Arms of thy Providence, that I may have yet

* *Here name the sinful Act you have committed.*

a farther Space to repent of mine Iniquity. And grant, I beseech thee, that when I awake in the Morning, I may be warned by the woful Remembrance of this Day's Fall, to take more Care of my Steps, and to shun or refuse those Snares and Temptations that lie all around me. All which I do most humbly and earnestly beg of thee, even for Jesus Christ his sake, in whose Name and Words I farther Pray,

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

DIRECTIONS *for the Exercise of our* Private Religion *in the State of our* Progress *and* Improvement *in the* Christian Life, *with* Forms *of* Private Devotion *fitted for this State.*

When you enter into your Closet in the Morning, *endeavour to affect yourself with Gratitude and Thankfulness to God for his Grace, by representing to yourself the Danger and Misery of that sinful State, out of which you are recovered, and the great Incapacity you were in to recover without his Assistance; and then make this* Thankful Acknowledgment *to him.*

O Most gracious and most merciful Father, thou art a liberal Benefactor to thy Creation, a never-failing Friend to Mankind, and a most tender Lover of Souls, for whose everlasting Welfare thou hast been always consulting, and hast left no Method of Love unattempted, to rescue them from Sin and Misery. O blessed, for ever blessed, be thy great Name, for the Experience I have had of this thy fatherly Goodness. I am a Monument of thy Goodness, a living Instance and Wonder of thy Mercy; for me hast thou quickened, who was dead in Trespasses and Sins, and who had, long ago, perished in mine Iniquities, hadst thou not been infinitely patient and long-suffering; I had forfeited my Soul to thee, and thou mightest justly have cut me off, and given me my Portion with Hypocrites; and considering how I provoked thee to it by my daily Rebellions, I cannot but admire thy Forbearance towards me: But that thou shouldest not only forbear me, but follow me with thy Kindness, and never cease importuning me to return to my Duty and Happiness, till thou hadst conquered me by thy gracious Perswasions, O incomparable Love! O amazing Goodness! never to be sufficiently admired and adored! Wherefore, praised, for ever praised, be thy Grace, which hath redeemed my Life from eternal Death, and my Soul from the nethermost Hell; which hath rescued me from the Snare of the Devil, and the pernicious Bondage of my Lusts, and implanted in my Nature these heavenly Graces and Dispositions, and hitherto improved and advanced them towards my eternal Happiness. This, O my God, all this, I owe to thy free and undeserved Goodness, that I that was dead, am now alive; that I that was lost, am found; that I that was a Slave to my Lusts, am made free from Sin, and translated into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God, is purely the Effect of thy free Grace, and to be intirely ascribed to thy all-powerful Goodness. Go on, O Lord, go on, I beseech thee, and perfect thine own Work, that so the Glory of it may be for ever redounding to thee; and that as I have been hitherto a signal Instance of thy Goodness, so I may be an happy Instrument of thy Praise to eternal Ages. And grant, I beseech thee, that the Sense of thy unspeakable Kindness towards me, may so captivate my Soul and all my Faculties, as that I may be most intirely thine; as that my Reason and Will, my Fear and Hope, and Love and Desire, may, from henceforth, be all resigned up to thee, and for ever devoted

to the Honour and Worship of thy infinite Glories and Perfections; and this I most humbly beg for Jesus Christ his sake, to whom with thyself, and thy Eternal Spirit, be render'd all Honour, Glory and Power, from this Time forth and for evermore. *Amen.*

After this Thanksgiving, consider briefly with yourself the indispensible Necessity of your Perseverance to the End, and how not only vain and fruitless, but also hurtful and mischievous to you, all your past Labour in Religion will be without it; and then conclude your Morning-Devotion with this Prayer for Perseverance.

O God, who art unchangeably holy and blessed, who art the same Yesterday, to Day, and for ever, and dost never swerve or vary from the essential Goodness and Purity of thine own Nature, look down, I beseech thee, upon me, a fickle, weak and mutable Creature, whom thou hast redeemed to thyself, and hitherto conducted by thy Grace and Spirit. Thou knowest, O Lord, the Weakness of my Nature, and how unable I am, without thy Strength and Assistance, to finish the Race which thou hast set before me; thou knowest what Temptations I must struggle with, and what Difficulties I must yet overcome, before I am seized of the blessed Prize I am contending for: wherefore, since thou hast hitherto been my constant Support and Defence, forsake me not now for thy Name's sake, but as thou hast begun a good Work in me, so I beseech thee to finish and compleat it; to uphold my feeble Soul by thy free Spirit, under all Temptations and Difficulties, that so by patient Continuance in well-doing, I may seek for, and at last obtain Honour and Glory, Immortality and Eternal Life: For which End, O Lord, preserve me from being over-confident of my own Abilities, and inspire me with a holy Jealousy of myself, that whilst I stand I may take heed lest I fall. And if at any Time I should be so base, and so unhappy, as to offend thee wilfully (which I beseech thee to prevent for thy Mercy and Compassion sake), O suffer me not to sleep in my Sin, but recal me instantly by the Checks of my Conscience, and the Convictions of thy Spirit, lest while I add Sin to Sin, and one Degree of Wickedness to another, my Lusts should regain their Dominion over me, and thou shouldst be angry with me, and reject me from thy Covenant for ever. And that I may every Day serve thee more freely and stedfastly, wean me, I beseech thee, more and more from those Temptations to Sin that are round about me, and give me such a true Understanding of the nature of all the Goods and Evils of this World, as that neither the Flatteries of the one, nor the Terrors of the other, may ever be able to withdraw me from my Duty. And lest while I am mortifying my old Sins, I should carelesly permit new ones to spring up in my Nature; Good God, do thou mind me to search and try my own Heart, and take a severe account even of the smallest Defects and Imperfections within me; that so I may correct and reform them in Time, before they are improved into inveterate Habits. And grant that I may be always so sensible of my own Imperfection, as that I may never rest in any present Attainment, but may still be pressing forward to the Mark of my high Calling in Jesus Christ. Suggest to me, I beseech thee, frequent Thoughts of my Mortality, that so while I have Time and Opportunity, I may be preparing for my Departure hence, and making provision for a dying Hour. In order whereunto, assist me, O Lord, I beseech thee, strictly to examine and review my past sinful Courses, that so if there be any remains of Guilt abiding upon my Conscience, I may purge them away by proper Acts of Repentance, before I go hence and be no more seen! And grant that as I have formerly abounded in Sin, so that I may now redeem that precious Time I have lost, by abounding in the contrary Vir-

tues, that so, as far as in me lies, I may revoke and undo the multitude of my past Sins, by doing all the Good I am able for the future. And that I may hold out and persevere to the end, preserve and continue me in the Communion of thy Church, and suffer me not to be led away by the Errors of the Wicked, and to fall from my own stedfastness. And finally, I beseech thee to grant, that in the Use of these blessed Means, I may so far prevail over the Infirmities and Corruptions of my Nature, as that at last I may have a clear and certain Feeling of my own Integrity and Uprightness towards thee; that so being from thence assured of thy Love, and of my Title to eternal Happiness, I may run the Ways of thy Commandments more chearfully, and at last finish my Course with unspeakable Joy. And now, O Lord, I resign myself to thee, take me, I beseech thee, into thy Care and Protection this Day, preserve me from all Evil, but especially from Sin, and quicken me by thy Spirit unto every good work, that so I may serve thee with a free and chearful Mind, and make it my Meat and Drink to do thy blessed Will. All which I humbly beg for Jesus Christ's sake, in whose Name and Mediation I farther Pray,

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

In the Evening, *when you enter into your Closet, consider what is the present Frame and Temper of your Mind: and upon Inquiry you will perceive, either that thro' the present* Prevalency *of your* corrupt Nature, *you are* averse *to Divine Offices, or that thro'* bodily Infirmity, *you are* indisposed *to them, or that thro'* Worldly-mindedness *and* Vanity of Spirit, *you are* cold *and apt to be* distracted *in them; or lastly, that your* Heart *is very much* enlarged, *and your* Mind *and* Affections *vigorously* disposed *towards Divine and Heavenly Things.*

If upon Enquiry you find that thro' the present Prevalency *of your* corrupt Nature, *you are* averse *to Divine Offices, endeavour to affect yourself with Shame and Sorrow for it, by representing to your Mind the great Impiety and Baseness, the monstrous Folly and Ingratitude of this your present Temper, and then offer up this following* Prayer.

O My most gracious God, and most kind and merciful Father, thou art the best Friend I have in all the World, and have shewn a thousand Times more Love to me than ever I shewed to myself; but after all the vast and most endearing Obligations thou hast laid upon me, this vile and ungrateful Heart of mine still retains some Dregs of its antient Enmity against thee. Had I but the common Sense and Ingenuity of a Man in me, how could I think of thee without Raptures of Love; how could I draw near unto thee without Transports of Delight and Complacency! But, vile and ungrateful that I am, I can think of all thy Goodness with cold and frozen Affections, and can come into thy Presence, not only with Indifference but Reluctancy. Good God! what am I made of? what an insensible Soul do I carry about me! I am ashamed of myself, I am confounded with the sense of my own Baseness; and yet, woe is me, I cannot help it. I strive to shake off this Clog of my corrupt Nature, but still it hangs upon me, and sinks and weighs down my Soul as oft as 'tis aspiring towards thee. O my God, have pity upon me, deliver me from this Body of Sin, ease my weary and heavy laden Soul of this grievous Burden under which it labours and groans, and suffer not this spark of Divine Life, which thou hast kindled in me, to be opprest and extinguish'd by it; but so cherish it, I beseech thee, with the continual Influences of thy Grace, as that at length it may break thro' all this Rubbish that suppresses it, and finally rise

into a glorious Flame. Then shall I always approach thee with Joy, and breathe up my Soul to thee in every Prayer; then shall my Heart be firmly united to thee in a devout and chearful Affection, and my Prayers shall come up as Incense before thee, and breathe a sweet smelling Savour into thy Nostrils. Hear me therefore, O my God, I beseech thee, and strengthen me with all might in the inward Man, that for the future I may contend more vigorously and successfully against these vile Inclinations of my Nature, which do so miserably hamper and depress my Soul, that so at last I may be a Conqueror, and more than a Conqueror, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

If thro' any bodily Infirmity, *such as* Melancholy, Weariness, Drowsiness, *or* Sickness, *you find yourself* indisposed *to Divine Offices, endeavour to quicken your sluggish Mind with the Consideration of some one of the most moving Arguments of your Religion, such as the Love of God and of your Saviour, the Majesty of God's Presence in which you are, or the blessed Immortality you hope for; and then address yourself to God in this following* PRAYER.

O Blessed God, who art a most pure and active Spirit, who dost always move with an uncontroulable Freedom, and art never hindred or wearied in thy Operations; have pity upon me, I beseech thee, thy poor infirm Creature, who am cumbred with this Body of Death, and so deprest by its manifold Frailties, that I cannot lift up my Heart unto thee. Thou knowest, O Lord, my Spirit is willing tho my Flesh is weak; my labouring Soul aspires towards thee, it stretches forth the Wings of its Desires towards thee, and would fain mount up above all Earthly Things, and unite itself with thee in eternal Love; but, alas! its Fervors are dampt, and its Endeavours tired by this clog of Flesh that hangs upon it, and perpetually sinks and weighs it down again. O my God, draw near unto me, and touch my Mind with such a powerful Sense of thee, as in despite of those my Bodily Indispositions may attract and draw up my Soul unto thee. And if it be thy blessed Will, release me from these fleshly Incumbrances, and fit my Body to my Mind, that I may serve thee, as I desire to do with a fervent and a chearful Spirit. But if it shall seem good in thine Eyes, to leave me struggling under these Bodily Oppressions, Lord give me Patience and Submission to thy Heavenly Will; that so when I cannot approach thee with that Pleasure and Satisfaction I desire, I may be heartily content to serve thee upon any Terms, and that what I want of Vigor and Chearfulness in my Religion, I may make up in Truth and in Reality. And O let the Sense of these my present Indispositions cause me more vehemently to long after that free and blessed State, wherein, with fixt and steady Thoughts, with flagrant Love and an intire Devotion of Soul, I shall for ever worship, praise, and glorify thy Name. *Amen.*

If thro' present Worldly-mindedness *or* Vanity of Spirit, *you find yourself* cold *and apt to be* distracted *in your Religious Offices, endeavour to stir up your Affections by representing to yourself the Greatness and Urgency of your Spiritual Wants, the Vanity of all outward Things, and the Reality and Fulness of Heavenly Enjoyments. And do what you can to recollect your wandring Thoughts, by setting yourself in the Presence of the Great God, to whose All-seeing Eye every Thought and Motion of your Soul is open and naked. And when by thus doing you have composed your Mind into a more serious Frame, present this following* PRAYER.

O Thou ever Blessed Majesty, who fillest Heaven and Earth with thy Presence, and art always listening to the Supplications of a world of Creatures that hang upon thee, open, I beseech thee, thine Ears of Mercy to

me, who am unfit and unworthy to approach thee; who, by setting my Affections upon Things below, and plunging myself into the Cares and Pleasures of this Life, have estranged and alienated my Mind from thee, and lost that delightful Relish of thee, with which I was wont to draw near unto thee. And now that I am retired from the World to converse with thee, and spread my Wants and my Desires before thee, those worldly Cares and Delights, with which I have been too too conversant, are importunately thrusting themselves upon me, to divert my Thoughts, distract my Intentions, and carry away my Affections from thee; by reason whereof my Mind wanders, my Hope droops, and my Desires are frozen, and whilst I am drawing near thee with my Lips, my Heart is running away from thee. O my God, have pity upon me, pluck my Soul out of this deep Mire, quicken, raise, and spiritualize these my groveling Affections. Possess this Heart, which opens itself to thy gracious Influences, with such a strong and vigorous Love to thee, as may lift me up above all Earthly Things, and continually carry forth my Soul in vehement desires after thee! that so I may always approach thee with a joyful Heart, being glad to leave the company of all other Things to go to thee, my God, my exceeding Joy. Give me a sober, diligent, and collected Spirit, that is neither choaked with Cares, nor scattered with Levity, nor discomposed with Passion, nor estranged from thee with sinful prejudice or inadvertency; but fix it fast to thyself with the indissoluble Bands of an active Love and pregnant Devotion; that so, whenever I prostrate myself before thee, I may presently be borne away, far above all these sensible Goods, in a high Admiration of thee, and a passionate Longing after thee. And now, O Lord, while I am addressing to thee, gather in, I beseech thee, my wandring Thoughts, and fix and stay them upon thyself. And, O do thou touch my cold and earthly Desires with an out-stretched Ray from thyself, and cause them to rise and flame up to thee in Fervors answerable to my pressing Wants; that I may so ask as that I may receive, so seek as that I may find, so knock as that it may be opened unto me, thro' Jesus Christ my blessed Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

If after this you find your Heart *is very much* enlarged, *and your* Mind *and* Affections *vigorously* disposed *towards God and Heavenly Things, fix your Mind a little while upon the Beauty and Excellency of his Nature, or upon some of the most affecting Instances of his Love, or upon the blessed State above, and then go on with this following* PRAYER.

O Thou most excellent Being, thou infinitely amiable and adorable Majesty, thou Pattern of Beauty and Standard of Goodness, who art glorious beyond all Praise, and dost out-reach all Wonder, and comprehend all Perfection; blessed be thy Name, thou hast touched my Soul with a lively sense of thy Glory; I feel it shining thro' me, and like an active flame insinuating into my heart; it fires my Love, cherishes my Hope, wings my Devotion, and diffuses a vital warmth over all my Faculties; it raises me up into a Heavenly State, and fills me with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory: it captivates every thought in Obedience to thy Will, and brings every power of my Soul into subjection to thee. Blessed be thy Name, thou hast conquered me by thy Love, and I resign myself to thee with a chearful heart. I am entirely thine, I am thy Servant, truly I am thy Servant, and in this Title I glory more than in all the Honours of the World. But tho I am highly advanced and exalted by serving thee, yet thou art so infinitely happy in the boundless Perfections, of thy own Nature, that thou canst reap no other advantage from it, but only the pleasure

pleasure of seeing thy poor Creature blessed and made happy by it. What then shall I render unto thee, O thou Joy of my Life, thou Treasure of my Love, thou supreme Felicity of my Nature! Alas, I have nothing but my self to give thee, nothing but this poor Heart that burns with Love to thee, that pants and breathes after thee, and desires above all Things in the World, to be eternally united to thee in perfect Love. If I had ten thousand Hearts to love thee, ten thousand Tongues to praise thee, I would devote them all to thee, as freely and chearfully as I do myself. For whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee. O God, thou art my God, and my Portion for ever. In thee I am blest, and in the Light of thy Countenance I rejoice more than in all the Joys and Pleasures of the World. I am ravished with thy Beauty, I admire thy Love, and from the bottom of my Soul adore thy Wisdom and Goodness; my Heart is ready, O Lord, my Heart is ready, I will sing and give praise: Awake up my Glory, awake all the Powers of my Soul, I myself will awake and celebrate thy Praises. Praised be the God of Glory, praised be the God of Love, praised be the Father of Mercies, praised be the best Friend of Souls, for thy Goodness reaches to the Heavens, thy Glory shines thro'out the Creation; and thy Mercy is spread over all thy Works. Who can comprehend thine infinite Beauties, who can rehearse thy noble Acts! who can shew forth all thy Praise! I do confess my Thoughts are infinitely too short, my Affections too narrow, my Expressions too scanty, to comprehend and sufficiently admire and celebrate thy Glory. But, O my God, thou knowest that I love thee, and, blessed be thy Name, I feel infinite reason so to do. O that I could love thee more, that I could love thee but as much as Angels and glorified Spirits do, who yet cannot love thee as much as thou deservest, because thou deservest to be beloved, infinitely. But my Soul thirsts for thee, and longs after thee. O when shall I be admitted into thy blessed Presence, there to see, and admire, and love and adore thee for ever! When shall I shake off this Clog of sinful Mortality, that sinks and depresses me, and flee to those happy Regions of perfect Love, where I shall continually feed upon thee with inexpressible Delight, and be filled with a strong and everlasting Sense of thy Goodness. O thou that art the beginner and finisher of every good Work, be pleased to assist my holy Endeavours, to withdraw my Mind more and more from these sensible Things, that it may have a clearer sight of its Heavenly Country from whence it came, and whither it desires to return; that so, having my Eye always fix'd on that blessed Recompense of Reward, I may live above this World, and, in despite of all its Terrors and Allurements, persevere to the end in a steady and even Course of Obedience. And now, O Lord, since thou hast been graciously pleased to inspire my Mind with these delightful Thoughts of thee, and, to enlarge my Heart with such sweet Transports of Love to thee; grant, I beseech thee, that they may not only please, but better me; that they may lift me up above all the Temptations of this World, and revive my Strength, and quicken my Endeavours, and compose my distrustful Heart into a stedfast Dependence upon thee, that so I may be fruitful in all good Works, and my Heart may be establish'd unblameable in Holiness before thee, unto the Coming of our Lord Jesus. *Amen, Amen.*

After you have used one or more of the foregoing Prayers, according as they suit with the present Temper of your Mind, take a short view of your Defects and Imperfections, and especially of those that cleave most to your Nature; and briefly represent to your Mind the intrinsick Evil and Vileness of them, and how they clog your Religion, blemish your Nature, and obstruct your Happiness, and then conclude with the following Prayer, for growth in Grace.

O God, who art the most excellent Nature, the Perfection of all Beauty, and the Fountain of all Graces, who dost infallibly understand what is best to be chosen, and invariably choose by the best and purest Reason; look down, I beseech thee, upon thy poor defective Creature, who am ashamed of myself to see how unlike thee I am; how I am laden with Imperfections, and how, after all my religious Endeavours, my Nature is still vitiated with unreasonable Lusts and Affections; how much Vanity and Impertinence there yet remains in my Mind, how much Perverseness in my Will, how much spiritual and carnal Iniquity in my Affections and Appetites. Lord, I have been long a contending with this corrupt Nature, and yet upon all Occasions I find myself too too prone to be *. Woe is me, even my fairest Graces have their Spots and Blemishes, my purest Dispositions their sinful Intermixtures, and my best Works their Flaws and Imperfections. O my God, have pity on me, who here lie sighing at thy Feet, under a miserable diseased Nature; and as thou hast begun the blessed Cure in me, so for Christ his sake, I beseech thee to compleat it; that, being intirely recovered, and raised up unto newness of Life, I may, in the perfect Health and Vigor of my Soul, serve and glorify thee for ever. For which end, I beseech thee, confirm me more and more in the Belief of those immortal Pleasures beyond the Grave, which thou hast treasur'd up for those that love and obey thee, that by the strength of a lively Faith, and vigorous Hope, my Soul may be rais'd above this World, and learn to despise and trample upon all its gilded Vanities, whensoever they present themselves either to allure or to terrify me from pursuing the Heavenly Enjoyments. Excite in me such a vehement Thirst after those Rivers of Pleasures above, as may every Day render me more cool and indifferent towards Earthly Things, more contented and satisfied under all the Events and Issues of thy Providence, and more active and vigorous in my Heavenly Calling. And I beseech thee to inspire me with such clear and lively Apprehensions of thy essential Beauties and Perfections, and of thy bountiful Love, and boundless Benevolence to all thy Creatures, as may every Day more and more raise and improve my Love to thee; that this being the great Spring and Principle of all my Actions, may continually excite me to a chearful Obedience to thy Will, and a vigorous Imitation of thy Perfections. O cause me to love thee for thyself, and Religion for thee, and the Instruments of Religion, in order to thy Glory and my own Happiness; that so founding my Content upon thee, and the blessed Interests of a virtuous Life, I may grow in Grace, and be rich in good Works, and go on with a satisfied and triumphant Spirit from Imperfection to Strength, from Acts to Habits, and from Habits to Confirmation in Grace; and may be still more and more confirmed in all the Heavenly Graces, till they are finally consummated into everlasting Glory. And when, by thy Grace and Assistance, I have perfectly conquered the corrupt Nature within, and the Temptations without me, and am arrived into the State of everlasting Triumph, I will lay all my Victories at thy Feet, and, with Palms in my Hand, and Hallelujahs on my Lips, celebrate thy Praises to Eternity. Hear me, O my God, in this and whatever else thou knowest to be needful for me, even for Jesus Christ his sake, in whose Name and Words I farther Pray,

* *Here name the particular Infirmities that stick closest to your Nature.*

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

The End of the First PART.

TO THE

Right Honourable

AND

Right Reverend Father in GOD,

HENRY

Lord Bishop of *LONDON*,

And one of his Majesty's most Honourable Privy-Council, *&c.*

My LORD,

I Here present to Your Lordship the *first* Volume of a *second* Part of that Treatise of *Christian Life*, which I published some Years since, and which under the Protection of Your *Venerable* Name hath found good Acceptance with the World; and to make an ingenuous Confession to Your Lordship, my Design in this *second* Dedication is not purely to render You the due Respects of a *Presbyter* to his *Diocesan*; nor to tender those *just* Acknowledgments I owe to Your Lordship for the Happiness I have enjoy'd, with the rest of Your Clergy, under the *auspicious* Influence of Your *Serene* and *Watchful* Government; no, nor yet to express the *grateful* Sense I have, and shall always retain, of the *personal* Obligations you have laid upon me: no, my Lord, tho *these* were all of them sufficient Inducements, yet I confess, that together *with* these, I had a certain *Politick* End in my Eye. For I thank God I can truly say, my *main* Design

Deſign in compoſing this Treatiſe was to *benefit* the *World*; but reflecting upon the manifold *Defects* it abounds with, after all the *Pains* I had beſtowed upon it, I found that, to palliate its *internal* Blemiſhes, it was but needful to grace it with ſome *external* Ornament, and could think of none ſo proper for my Purpoſe, as this of affixing Your Lordſhip's *Name* to it; a Name that carries with it Power enough to recommend any thing to the World, that is but *pious*, and *honeſt*, and *well-deſigned*; and all *that*, I am ſure, *this* is, how *defective* ſoever it be in *other* reſpects; which, together with the Experience I have had of the great *Candor* and *Benignity* of your Lordſhip's Temper, gives me Encouragement to hope, that you will not only *accept*, but *approve* it; and then, I am ſure, Your Lordſhip's *Approbation* will give it *Credit* and *Authority* enough with the World, to enable it to effect thoſe *good* and *honeſt* Ends for which it was ſincerely *intended* by,

My Lord,

Your Lordſhip's

Moſt Humble, moſt Obliged,

And Faithful Servant,

JOHN SCOTT.

THE PREFACE.

WHEN *I wrote the Treatise of* Christian Life, *of which* this *and* another *Volume, now in the Press, is a* second *Part, I had no Design of engaging any farther in that Argument; but* now *I find by Experience, that* Writing *is like* Building, *wherein the* Undertaker, *to supply some* Defect, *or serve some* Convenience *which at first he* foresaw *not, is usually forced to* exceed *his first* Model *and* Proposal, *and many times to* double *the* Charge *and* Expence *of it. For after that Treatise began to be a little known in the World, I was advised from several Hands that there was one Thing* wanting *in it, which is the common* Defect *of most* Practical Treatises, *and that was, an* Explication *and* Proof *of those main* Principles *of Religion in which the* Obligation *of our Christian* Duty *is founded, which they thought might be sufficiently done within a very* narrow *compass, tho herein I find that either they were very much* mistaken, *or that I have very much* exceeded *the necessary Limits of my Argument, which I am not* yet *convinced of, but* that *I must submit to the Judgment of the World. I confess the Prospect of doing it in that* narrow *Compass* they *talk'd of was a great Inducement with me to undertake it, and perhaps had I* foreseen *at first what a* large *Field of Discourse it would oblige me to traverse, I shou'd never have entred on it; but when once I was* in, *I could not handsomly* retreat.

And indeed, considering with what prodigious Rudeness *and* Insolence *the very* Foundations *of Religion are struck at in this* dissolute *Age, he who would* now *treat of them to any purpose, will find himself obliged* not *only to give a distinct and clear* Explication *of them, but also to assert the* Truth *of them with convincing* Evidence, *and to* answer *and* expose *those Atheistical* Cavils *that are levelled against them; which* latter *would have been much less necessary in an Age of a more* Serious *and* Religious *Genius. And upon this account, I have been forced upon a much* larger *and more* laborious *Proof of the several* Principles *of Religion than I first intended. Not that I have any great Hope of reclaiming those who are* professed *Atheists to the Acknowledgment of the* Truth; *for when Men are* seduced *by* Lust, *as I verily believe most Atheists are, there is little Reason to expect they will be* reduced *by* Reason. *But that which I chiefly aimed at, is to* confirm *and* establish

those

those that are wavering, and to antidote *all against this spreading Contagion of* Irreligion *and* Atheism, *which in a fatal Chain, draws after it not only the Ruin of Mens Souls* hereafter, *but also the utter Subversion of all Human Society* here: *And it is this hath constrained me to enlarge this* Second *Part into* Two *Volumes, which at first View I promised my self to finish in* One.

In this First *Volume, I have treated only of* those *Principles which are common to* natural Religion *and* Christianity *together; as an Introduction to which, I have in the* first *Chapter* explained *and* demonstrated *the* natural *Distinction of Human Actions into* Good *and* Evil, *by some* eternal *Reasons* for *or* against *them; and having shewn at large that God hath made this Distinction sufficiently clear and evident to all Men, to enable them to conduct themselves to their own* Happiness, *and that those Actions of Men which fall under this* natural *Distinction, are the principal subject Matter of the Commands and Prohibitions of Religion; I proceed in the second Chapter, briefly to explain the Nature of Religion in* general, *and of Natural and Christian Religion in* particular: *From the Nature of* both *which, I have deduced those Fundamental Principles, from whence the Obligations of Religion are derived; the five first of which, being common to* Natural Religion *with* Christianity, *I have handled in this first Volume in so many distinct Chapters.*

And then as for the last, viz. *the Acknowledgment of* Jesus Christ *our* Mediator, *which contains under it all those Religious Principles that are peculiar to* Christianity, *tho I have endeavoured to treat of it with all the Brevity that is consistent with a clear and satisfactory Account of the whole Argument, yet it is run out into a* Second *Volume, which is now in the Press, and, I hope, within a few Weeks will be ready to follow* this. *And perhaps, when the Reader considers the* Copiousness *of the Argument it handles, he will rather blame me for being too brief than too tedious; for, in treating of those Doctrines which have been handled* at large *in other* English *Treatises of the Christian Faith, and especially in that incomparable one of our most Learned Bishop of* Chester, *on the* Creed *(a Book, which next to the Bible, I thankfully acknowledge my self more beholden to for my Instruction in the Doctrines of Religion, than to any* one *I ever read) I have contracted my self into as* narrow *a Compass as the barely* necessary *Explication of them would permit me; but where that* renowned *Pen hath insisted more* Cursorily *(as for instance on the particular Offices of our Blessed* Mediator) *I have most* enlarged *my self, tho even* there *I have for brevity sake* pretermitted *some Things I intended less* immediate *and* necessary *appertaining to the Argument.*

Upon the whole I can truly ſay, that to the beſt of my underſtanding, I have herein delivered nothing but what is agreeable to the Doctrine of the Primitive Church, *which, as the moſt* faithful *Comment on the Holy Writings of our Saviour and his Apoſtles, I have all along* carefully *conſulted in* doubtful *and* difficult *Caſes; and this is the reaſon why it hath ſtuck ſo long in Hand, the Pains I have taken in* conſulting *the* antient *Monuments of Chriſtianity about it, being, as I may truly ſay, at leaſt* double *to that of* compoſing *it; and in following the* Primitive *Doctrine, I have followed the Doctrine of the* Church of *England, which in its* Faith, Government, *and* Diſcipline, *I believe, in my Conſcience, is the* moſt *Primitive Church in the World.*

As for the Method *I have choſen, which is to deduce all the Doctrines of Chriſtianity from one* General *Head,* viz. *the Doctrine of the Mediator, it is the moſt* convenient *I could think of for* my *Purpoſe, which was to repreſent at once to the Reader's view* all *the Parts of our Holy Religion in their natural Connexion* with *and Dependence* on *one another, that ſo he might be the better able to judge of the* beautiful Contexture *and* admirable Contrivance *of the whole, and that by ſeeing how* regularly *all the Parts of it proceed out of* one *common* Principle, *and* conſpire *in* one *common* End, *he may be the better ſatisfied that Chriſtianity is ſo far from being a Heap of* Incoherencies, *as ſome have* injuriouſly *repreſented it, that conſidering it merely as an* Hypotheſis, *abſtracted from all that* external *Evidence that accompanies it, the very* Art *and* Contrivance *of it, the* Proportion, Symmetry, *and* Correſpondence *of its Parts, their* Subſerviency *to each other, and the* Concurrence *and* Tendency *of them all together to the common* Ends *of Religion, are ſuch as do apparently exceed all* Human *Invention, and argue it to be the Product of a* divine *Mind. For as he who would form a true* Idea *of the* Beauty *of a* Picture, *muſt not contemplate the Parts of it* ſeparately, *but ſurvey them all* together, *and conſider them in their* Proportions *and* Correſpondencies *with each other; ſo he who would frame a right Notion of Religion muſt not look upon it as it lies* ſcattered *and* divided *into* ſingle *Parts and Propoſitions, but conſider them in* contexture, *and as they are connected all together into one* Body *or* Hypotheſis. *For it is in their apt* Junctures, *their mutual* Dependencies *and admirable* Coherencies *with one another, that the* Beauty *and* Harmony *of the Whole conſiſts. And therefore to do* Right *to Chriſtianity, and enable the Reader to contemplate it with the greateſt* Advantage, *I have endeavour'd to repreſent to him the whole in a* View, *and to give him a Proſpect of* all *the Parts of it* together, *in an harmonious*

Union *and* Connexion *with each other. For I verily believe that the* mean *Opinion which ſome witty Men have entertained of Chriſtianity, proceeds in a great meaſure from their* broken *and* imperfect *Apprehenſions of it ; they underſtand it* piece-meal, *and take it aſunder into* ſingle *Propoſitions, which they conſider* ſeparately *and* apart *by themſelves, without ever putting them together into one* regular *Syſtem, and preſenting them to their Thoughts in that* orderly *Connexion wherein the Holy* Oracles *have delivered them to us. For I can ſcarce imagine how any Man of Senſe ſhould contemplate Chriſtianity* all together, *and* thorowly *conſider the* harmonious *Coherence of all its* Parts, *and the wonderful* Contrivance *of the* Whole, *without being captivated with the* Beauty *and* Elegancy *of it.*

And now I have nothing farther to add concerning this Treatiſe, but only to intreat the Reader not to be too ſevere *in the peruſal of it. For tho as for the* Doctrine *of it, I ſee no Reaſon at all to* apologize *for it, becauſe I am fully perſuaded of the* Truth *of it, yet being forced, as I was, to compoſe it by* ſnatches, *and in the more* quiet *intervals of a* buſy *and* uneaſy *Life, I very much ſuſpect the* Exactneſs *both of the* Stile *and* Method *of it ; and therefore all the Favour I deſire is this, that where I have* improperly *or* obſcurely *expreſs'd my ſelf, I may be conſtrued in the moſt* favourable *Senſe, and that where-ever I may ſeem to be* confuſed *or* immethodical, *it may be attributed to thoſe frequent* Interruptions *which the* Diſorders *of my* Body *have given to my* Thoughts. *And theſe are Requeſts ſo very* juſt *and* reaſonable, *that I am confident none will be ſo* peeviſh *as to deny me, but they who read Books only to* carp *and* find fault, *and without any deſign to* edify *their own Underſtandings. But I hope the* Reader *will conſider, that the Argument here treated of, is of too* great *moment to him to be ſo wretchedly* trifled *with, and that therefore he will not be either ſo* diſingenuous *to* me, *or* uncharitable *to* himſelf, *as to peruſe, with ſuch a* ſpiteful *Deſign, that which I* ſincerely *intended for his Good, and by which he, I am ſure, if he pleaſes, may be the* better *for ever.*

OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

PART II.

CHAP. I.

Concerning the Being and Nature of Moral *Goodneſs.*

ALL human Actions are either Neceſſary, or Sinful, or Indifferent. The *Neceſſary* are ſuch as are *commanded*, the *Sinful* ſuch as are *forbidden* by God, the *Indifferent* ſuch as are neither commanded nor forbidden, but left entirely free to our Choice and Diſcretion. Again, the neceſſary and the ſinful Actions are either ſuch as are neceſſary and ſinful *in themſelves*, and are commanded and forbidden upon the Account of ſome Good and Evil that is *inſeparable* to their Natures; or ſuch as are *indifferent* in their own Natures, as to any Good or Evil *inherent* in them; but are made neceſſary or ſinful by ſome *poſitive* Command or Prohibition ſuperinduc'd upon 'em. Of the firſt Sort are thoſe which we call *moral* Actions; as being the ſubject Matter of the Moral Law, which commands and forbids nothing but what is *eſſentially* and *immutably* good and evil; and whilſt there was no other Law but this, every Action which did not oblige by ſome *eternal* Reaſon, or which is the ſame, by ſome *inſeparable* Good or Evil, was left *free* and *indifferent*. But in proceſs of time God ſuperadded to this *moral* Law a great many *poſitive* ones, whereby he obliged Men to do, and forbear ſundry of thoſe *indifferent* Things, which were left to their Liberty by the Law of *Nature*. For ſuch we call the Rites and Ceremonies of the *Moſaick Law*; all which were *indifferent* before they were *impoſed*, and as ſoon as ever the *Impoſition* was taken off from them, did immediately return to their Primitive *Indifferency*: So that by the Abolition of their *ceremonial* Law, the *Jews* were reſtored to all the Liberties of the *Moral*; excepting only the Matter of the two *Sacraments*, and of maintaining a *viſible Communion* with the Church, which are determined by poſitive Laws of Chriſtianity. And of this latter Sort of neceſſary and ſinful Actions, are, not only all thoſe indifferent ones which God himſelf has commanded and forbidden *immediately*, but alſo all thoſe which he commands and forbids by his *Viceroys* and *Repreſentatives* in this World. For whatſoever he hath not commanded or forbidden by *his own immediate* Dictate and Authority, he hath authorized his Vicegerents to command or forbid, as *they* ſhall judge it moſt expedient for the Publick. So that when they command what God hath not forbidden, or forbid what he hath not commanded, *their Will* is *God*'s, who commands us by their Mouths, and ſtamps their Injunctions with his own Authority.

And of this Diſtinction between Actions that are *morally* and *poſitively* neceſſary, the Scripture frequently takes notice, and particularly, *Mich.* vi. 6, 7, 8. *Wherewithal ſhall I come before the Lord, and bow my ſelf before the high God? Shall I come before him with Burnt Offerings, with Calves of a year old*, &c. No, theſe are not the Things that will render me acceptable in his Eyes, and

procure me a welcome Admission into his Presence; and yet it is certain that these Things were then *required* and *commanded*, and therefore were *positively* necessary; but that they were not necessary *in themselves* upon the Account of any *intrinsick* Goodness that was in them, is evident from what follows, *He hath shewed thee O Man what is good*; as much as if he should have said, the Things abovenamed are in their *own* Nature indifferent, having neither Good nor Evil in themselves; and are *made* necessary merely by *positive* Command, upon which Account they are insufficient to recommend you to God: But there are other Things that carry an *intrinsick* Beauty and Goodness in their Nature by which they strictly oblige you to embrace and practise them, and do thereupon recommend you by their own *native* Charms to the Love and Favour of God; and what these good Things are he hath sufficiently shewn or discovered to you, *viz. To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God,* which are the main and principal Duties that he *requires of you.* Which plainly implies that there are some Actions which are *morally*, that is, in their own Natures, *eternally* good, and therefore eternally necessary, and some that are necessary only because for *some* present Reason God wills and commands them. For no Account can be given why he should be more pleased with *Justice* and *Mercy* and *Humility*, than with *Sacrifice*, unless we suppose the former to be good, and therefore necessary upon *immutable* Reasons, and upon that account to be immutably pleasing to him; and the latter to be necessary only upon *mutable* Reasons, which therefore were to lose their Necessity as soon as those Reasons did alter or cease. For had *Sacrifices* been good in their *own* Nature, their Goodness had been as *unalterable* as their Nature; whereas, on the contrary we find, that whereas their *Nature* neither is nor can be altered, yet their *Goodness* or *Necessity* is. For as, before God adopted them into the Rubrick of Religion by his own positive Institution, they were *indifferent* Things: so after this Institution was repealed by a contrary Command, they became *unlawful.* So that it is *now* as necessary that we should *not* offer them in the Worship of God, as it was *before* that we *should.* And the same may be said of all the other Rites of the *Mosaick* Law: Which being in their own Nature Indifferent, could no otherwise be converted either into Necessary or Sinful, but by GOD's express Command or Prohibition. Whereas *Justice* and *Mercy*, &c. are good in themselves *abstractly* considered from all Will and Command; and are not good merely because they are *commanded*, but are commanded because they are *good*; because they carry with them such *unalterable* Reasons as do in themselves render the Practice of them eternally necessary. For tho there be very good Reason why Men should not offer material Sacrifices, notwithstanding they were once injoined; yet it can *never* be reasonable for them to be *unjust*, or *cruel*, or *proud*, because the contrary Virtues carry such *fixed* and *immutable* Reasons with them as will *bind* and *oblige* us to Eternity; insomuch, that tho we had a Dispensation to be *proud* under the Broad-Seal of Heaven, yet 'twould still be very *absurd* and *unreasonable* to be so. And as things that are only *positively* necessary or sinful, derive all their *Necessity* and *Sinfulness* from God's *direct* or *express* Command and Prohibition; so they cannot be commanded or forbidden by *Consequence.* For, if the Matter of them be *antecedently* lawful or indifferent, it must necessarily remain so till it is *directly* commanded or forbidden; there being no other Reason to bound and limit it, but only the Will of the Lawgiver in whose *disposal* it is; and therefore till he *directly* signifies his Will either for or against it, it must remain as it is, *i. e. Free* and *Indifferent.* But you will say, suppose God hath commanded *such* an indifferent Thing for *such* a Reason, doth it not thence follow, that he thereby commands every *other* indifferent Thing that hath the same Reason for it? I answer, No; for if the Reason why he commands it be *necessary* and *eternal*, it is not a Thing *indifferent*, but *morally* necessary, and so is every Thing else that hath the *same* Reason for it: And consequently the Reason of the Law, tho it be applied but

to one Thing, extends to every Thing of the same Nature; because in all Moral Cases the *Reason* of the *Law* is the *Law*. But if the Thing commanded be in it self *indifferent*, the Reason why it is commanded cannot be *Necessary*; and therefore tho there be the same *Reason* why another Thing of the same Nature should be commanded, yet it doth not necessarily oblige us unless it be commanded *actually*, because in such Cases it is not the *Reason* but the *Authority* of the Law that obliges; and therefore where there is only the Reason and not the Law, it lays no Obligation on the Conscience.

From the whole therefore it is evident, what is the Difference between Things that are *positively* and morally necessary and sinful; which I thought very necessary to explain at large, for the giving a fuller Light to the ensuing Discourse, in which I shall endeavour to shew,

First, That there is such an *intrinsick* Goodness in some *Human* Actions, as renders them for ever *necessary* and *obliging* to us.

Secondly, That God hath sufficiently discovered to us what those human Actions are, which carry with them this *perpetual Obligation.*

Thirdly, That these Actions, which carry with them this perpetual Obligation, are the main and *principal* Parts of Religion.

SECT. I.

That there is such an Intrinsick Good *in some Human Actions, as renders them for ever* necessary *and obliging to us.*

GOOD is twofold, *Absolute* or *Respective*; or the *Good* of the *End* and the *Good* of the *Means*. The *Good* of the *End* is that which is the *Perfection* and *Happiness* of any Being; the *Good* of the *Means* is that which tends and conduces thereunto. As for Instance, the *absolute Good* of a *brute Animal* consists in the *Perfection* and *Satisfaction* of its Sense, or in having perfect *Feeling* and *Sensation* of such Things as are most grateful to its *Appetite* and Senses. Its *Respective Good* is the *Means* by which its *Senses* are perfected, or render'd lively and vigorous, and by which it is provided for with such Things as are grateful and pleasing to them. For there being in every *animate* Nature a *Principle*, whereby it is *necessarily* inclined to *promote* its own *Preservation* and *Well-being*; that which hath in it a *Fitness* to *promote* this *End* is called *Good*, as on the contrary that which is apt to hinder it, *Evil*. Now *Man*, being not only a *sensitive* but a *rational Creature*, hath a *two-fold Good*, belonging to his *Nature*; the first *sensitive*, which is the same with that of *brute Animals*, consisting in the *Perfection* and *Satisfaction* of his *bodily Senses* and *Appetites*, and in those *Means* which conduce thereunto; and this for Distinction sake is called his *natural* Good; the second rational, which consists in the Perfection and Satisfaction of his *rational Faculties*, and in those means which tend thereunto; and this is stiled his *Moral Good*, tho in reality 'tis as much *Natural* as the former. For Man being naturally as well *rational* as *sensitive*, that which promotes his Rational Perfection and Happiness, is no less *naturally* good for him than that which promotes his sensitive: Nay, his rational Nature being the much more *noble* and *excellent* Part of him, that which naturally promotes the Perfection and Happiness of it, is in itself a much *greater* Good to his Nature, and ought to be preferred by him before any of those natural Goods which conduce only to the Happiness of his sensitive Nature; and he who indulges his *sensitive* Part in any Pleasure which his *rational* disallows, doth thereby create a *Torment* to himself, and raise a Devil in his own Mind. For tho *Reason* and *Religion* do allow that the *sensitive Nature* should be gratified in all its natural Appetites and Desires; yet neither allow, that it should be pamper'd and indulg'd in any such Excesses, as are prejudicial either to itself or to that Rational Nature whereunto it is joined; and he who indulges his Sense in any such Excesses, renders himself obnoxious to his

own Reason, and to gratify the *Brute* in him displeases the *Man*, and sets his two Natures at Variance. So that there is nothing can be *naturally* good for us, that is any way inconsistent with what is *morally* so, *i. e.* with what conduces to the Perfection and Happiness of our *rational Nature*; and tho this Natural and Moral good are no way inconsistent with one another, yet it is the moral that is the supreme Good of a Man, because it is the Good of his most excellent Nature. Having thus premised what I mean by *Good* in general, and particularly by *Moral Good*, I proceed to shew that in some human Actions there is such an *intrinsick Moral Good* as renders 'em for ever obliging to us. And this I shall endeavour in these following Propositions.

First, That the Happiness of human Nature is founded in its *Perfection.*

Secondly, That the Perfection of human Nature consists in acting suitably to the most *perfect Reason.*

Thirdly, That the most perfect Reason is that wherein all reasonable Beings do *consent* and *agree.*

Fourthly, That there are certain Rules of Moral Good, wherein all reasonable Beings are *agreed.*

Fifthly, That to act suitably to those Rules hath been always found by universal Experience *conducible* to the Happiness of human Nature, and the contrary *mischievous* thereunto.

I. That the Happiness of human Nature is founded in its *Perfection.* For the Perfection of Beings consists in their being *compleatly* disposed and adapted for the End whereunto they are designed. Now the End of all Beings that have Life and Sense, is that Sort of Happiness that is suitable to their Natures; for 'tis thither that they all of them naturally tend, and therein that their Faculties do all concenter. When therefore their Faculties or Powers of Action are compleatly disposed to enjoy the proper Happiness of their Natures, then are they *perfect* in their Kind. Thus for Instance, the *End* of *Brutes*, which have only *bodily Sense*, is *sensitive* and *corporeal Happiness*; and therefore then is the Brute Creature *perfect* in its Kind, when it hath not only all the Parts and Senses that are necessary to *procure* and *enjoy* its *Happiness*, but hath them also *perfectly* fitted, temper'd and qualified to *pursue* and *relish* it. And supposing that all the *Pleasure* or *Happiness* of a Beast consisted in the *Taste* and *Smell* of its Pasture, it could never be compleatly *happy* so long as the *Organs* of its *Smell* or *Taste* were *imperfect*. So that the *Perfection* of every *sensible Nature* consists in being perfectly *disposed* to enjoy its *natural Happiness*. And accordingly herein consists the *Perfection* of *human Nature*, in being perfectly *fitted* and *disposed* to enjoy and relish *human Happiness*. For this being its *proper End*, it is impossible it should ever be *perfect* in its Kind, till 'tis compleatly contempered and adapted thereunto. So that our *Happiness* must necessarily be founded in our *Perfection*, which is nothing else but the perfect Disposition of our Natures to relish and enjoy those *Goods* wherein the *Happiness* of our Nature consists; and till our Nature is *perfectly disposed* to enjoy them, all the good Things of Heaven and Earth will be insufficient to render us *perfectly Happy.*

II. That the *Perfection* of *human Nature* consists in acting suitably to the most *perfect Reason*. For *Reason* being the Top and Crown of human Nature, hath a natural Right to *command* and *dispose* of its Motions; to be the *Eye* of its Will, and the Guide of its Affections, and the *Law* of all its Powers of Action. And indeed, for what other use serves the *Reason* of a Man, but to prescribe Rules to his *unreasonable Affections*, to *light* and *direct* them to their proper Objects, and as they are moving towards them, to *moderate* their *Excesses*, and to *quicken* their Defects, and to lead them on to *true Happiness* in an even Course, thro' all the wild Mazes of popular Mistakes? And unless it be thus imployed, the Man is reasonable *in vain*, and his light like a Candle inclosed in a dark Lanthorn, burns out in waste, and spends itself in an useless and unprofitable Blaze. And whilst to *please* our *Appetites* and *Passions* we run counter to the Advice of our *Reason*, we *forsake* the Rule of our Natures, and act like *Beasts* and not like

Men; in which Courſe of Action if we *perſiſt*, we muſt neceſſarily *degenerate* from our *ſelves*, and *ſink* by degrees into the moſt *ſordid Brutality*. For when once our *Appetites* have gotten the *Command* of our *Reaſon*, and not only *dethroned* but *enſlaved* it, the very *Order* of our Nature is *tranſpoſed*, and we are become our own *Reverſe* and *Antipodes*. If therefore we would *arrive* at our Perfection, it muſt be by following our *Reaſon*, and ſubmitting all our *Affections* and *Appetites* to its Government. For what elſe can be the *Perfection* of a *rational Nature*, but to be *perfectly Rational*; and what is it to be perfectly rational, but to have our *Minds* thorowly *inſtructed* with the *Principles* of *right Reaſon*, and our *Will* and *Affections* intirely *regulated* by them? For herein conſiſts the *ſupreme Perfection* not only of *Men*, but of *Angels*; yea, and of *God* himſelf, the Crown and Glory of whoſe Nature it is, that he always *knows*, and *chooſes*, and *acts* what is *fitteſt*, and *beſt*, and *moſt Reaſonable* And when once our Underſtanding is ſo far *inlighten'd*, as that it always *dictates* right Reaſon to us; and our Will and Affections are ſo far *ſubdued*, as that they always freely and chearfully *comply* with it; we have arrived to the very Top of our Nature, and are commenced perfect Men in Chriſt Jeſus.

III. That the moſt perfect Reaſon is that wherein all reaſonable Beings do *conſent* and *agree*: For if there be any ſuch matter, as *True* and *Falſe*, *Reaſonable* and *Unreaſonable*, in the Nature of Things; and if there be any ſuch Thing as *Underſtanding* among Beings, whereby they are capable of diſtinguiſhing between the *one* and the *other*; either that muſt be True and Reaſonable which *all* Underſtandings do *conſent* and *agree* in: Or, *all* the Underſtandings that are in the World muſt be under a fatal *Cheat* and *Deluſion*. Which latter, being ſuppoſed, inevitably deſtroys all *Knowledge* and *Certainty*, and lays a Foundation for the wildeſt *Scepticiſm*. For ſuppoſing all Underſtandings to be *deceived* and *impoſed* on, it is impoſſible for us to be *certain* of any Thing; and for all we know, a Part may be bigger than the Whole, two and two may make Twenty, and both Parts of a Contradiction may be true. Nay, we can never be certain whether we are not Dreaming when we think we are Awake, and whether we are not Awake when we think we are Dreaming. Either therefore we muſt *renounce* all Certainty whatſoever, and *fluctuate* in eternal Scepticiſm; or *allow* that to be true and reaſonable which all Underſtandings do unanimouſly vote ſo.

IV. That there are certain Rules of moral Goodneſs, concerning the immutable Reaſon whereof all Underſtandings are *agreed*. For ſuch are all thoſe which preſcribe the Dueneſs of *Worſhip* and *Veneration* to God, of *Obedience* and *Loyalty* to our Parents and Superiors, of *Temperance* and *Fortitude* to our ſelves, and of *Juſtice* and *Charity* to one another; to the Goodneſs and Reaſonableneſs of which Rules, all Underſtandings do as unanimouſly *conſent* as to the Truth of any Propoſition in the Mathematicks. Now of all the Orders of reaſonable Beings, that which we moſt *converſe* with, and with whoſe Conſent and Agreement in any Matters we are beſt *acquainted*, is that of *Men*; and therefore if among Men we can diſcover ſuch an univerſal *Agreement* concerning the Goodneſs of theſe Rules, as will warrant us to conclude all other rational Beings to be *conſenting* with them, this will be a ſufficient Demonſtration of the Truth of the Propoſition. Theſe two Things therefore I ſhall endeavour to make out, 1. That the Reaſon of Men is *Univerſally* conſenting in this Matter, *viz.* That there is an *immutable* Goodneſs in theſe Rules of Morality. 2. That this univerſal Conſent of *Mens* Reaſon in this Matter is a ſufficient Demonſtration, that all *other* reaſonable Beings are conſenting with them.

Firſt, Therefore there is nothing more evident than that *Men* are univerſally agreed in this Matter, That to *Worſhip* God, to *Honour* their Parents and Superiors, to be *Temperate* in their Paſſions and Appetites, and *juſt* and *charitable* towards one another, are Things in their own Nature *immutably* good: That this is not an Opinion peculiar to ſuch an *Age*, or to ſuch a *Nation*, or to ſuch a Sect of Religion, but the *univerſal* Judgment of all Mankind, of whatſoever Age, Nation, or Religion. For 'tis upon this Judgment that all that *Conſcience* is

is founded, which approves of or condemns Mens Actions; which Conscience is nothing else but a Sense or Feeling of moral Good and Evil; and is every whit as natural to Mens Minds, as the Sense of pleasant or painful Touches to their Bodies. Since therefore general *Effects* must spring from general *Causes*, it necessarily follows, that *that Pain* and *Pleasure* which Mens Minds generally feel upon the Commission of *bad* and *good* Actions, must be resolved into some general Cause; and what else can that be, but the general *Consent* of their Reason concerning the immutable Evil of the *one* and Good of the *other*? I know 'tis pretended by some of our modern Navigators, that there are a Sort of People in the World who have not the least Sense of Good and Evil, and do own neither *God*, nor *Religion*, nor *Morality*. But considering the short Converse and imperfect Intercourse which these our new Discoverers have had with those barbarous Countries, it is fairly supposeable that the Inhabitants may have Notions both *Religious* and *Moral*, of which Strangers who understand not their Language and Customs and Manners, can make little or no Discovery. But suppose that what they report *were true*; yet by their own Confession these wretched *Barbarians* are in all other Things so extremely Brutish, that they discover no other Token of their Humanity but their Shape. For they live altogether *Regardless* of Themselves, of the *Conveniencies* of their Lives, and of the *Dignity* of their Natures; without making any *Reflections* on their own Minds, or any *Observations* from their own Experience. Since therefore all Knowledge is acquired by Attention, it is not at all impossible for Creatures, so utterly *supine* and *negligent*, to be ignorant of the most common Notions; but for any Man to question the Truth of this *general* Rule, because there are a few *Exceptions* from it, is every whit as absurd, as if he should question whether Men are generally *two legg'd* Animals, because there have been some Monsters with three. And what if among Men there are some Monsters in Respect of their *Minds*, as well as others in Respect of their *Bodies*; this is no more a Prejudice to the standing Laws of *human* Nature, than Prodigies are to the Regularity of the constant Course of *universal* Nature. *Specimen naturæ cujuslibet*, saith *Tully*, *a natura optima sumendum est*, i. e. *The true Sample of every Nature is to be taken from the best Natures of the Kind.* Since therefore the Men of all Nations and Ages and Religions, who have in any Measure attended to the Nature of Things, and made but any tolerable Use of their Reasons, are, and always have been *universally* agreed, That there is an immutable Good in Virtue, and Evil in Vice; it is no Argument at all, that this is not the *general Sense* of Mankind, supposing it *true*, which is very *questionable*, that there are some *few* such inhuman Barbarians in the World as make no Distinction at all between 'em. But then,

Secondly, This universal Consent of *Mens* Reason in this Matter, is a sufficient Demonstration, that all *other* reasonable Beings are consenting with them. For it shews that God himself is of this Mind: And if *He* be, we may be sure that all *other* reasonable Beings are. For if we believe that God made us, we must believe that he made us for some *End*; and if he made us for any End, he must esteem those Actions *Good* which *promote* it, and those *Evil* which *obstruct* and *hinder* it. And what other End can an infinitely happy and blessed Being have in making other Beings; but only to do them Good, and according to their several Capacities, to make them Partakers of his own Happiness? And if this be the End for which God made us, to be sure those Actions must be *good* in his Esteem that are *beneficial*, and those *evil* that are *hurtful* and *mischievous* to our Nature. And therefore since he hath implanted in us, not only a natural *Desire* of Happiness; but also a rational *Faculty* to discern what Actions make for our Happiness, and what not; we may be sure that whatsoever this Faculty doth *universally* determine to be good or evil for us, *is* good or evil in the Judgment of *God*: 'Tis true, when the Reason that is in *one* Man judges contrary to the Reason that is in *another*, there must be a *Disagreement* on one side or the other from the Reason and Judgment of *God*: But when *all* Mens Reason

is agreed, that *this* is Good and *that* Evil, it is plain that this is the Judgment of the rational Faculty, which *naturally* makes ſuch a *Diſtinction* of Things. For there is no Man, that uſes his Reaſon, can poſſibly think that *Truth* and *Falſhood*, *Juſtice* and *Injuſtice*, *Mercy* and *Cruelty* are equally *good* in themſelves; his rational Faculty being ſo framed, as that at the firſt Glance and Reflection, it naturally *diſtinguiſhes* 'em into *Good* and *Evil*. When therefore God hath created us with ſuch a *Faculty*, as naturally makes ſuch a *Judgment* of Good and Evil, that *Judgment* muſt be God's, as well as the *Faculty* which made it. That therefore which is the *unanimous Judgment* of all Men, muſt be the *natural Language* of the rational Faculty; and that which is the natural Language of the rational Faculty muſt be the Language of the *God of Nature*. For he who created me with ſuch a Faculty as naturally judges *this* Good and *that* Evil, muſt either have the ſame Judgment *himſelf*, or create in me a Contradiction to his *own* Judgment; and that Judgment which he hath created in *me*, he muſt be ſuppoſed to create in *all other* Beings that are capable of Judging; otherwiſe he would be the Author of *contradictory* Judgments. For, ſhould one rational Faculty naturally judge *this*, and another the *contrary*, they muſt neceſſarily be ſo framed as to *contradict* each other; and conſequently he who framed both muſt be the Author of the Contradiction. So that this *univerſal Conſent* of Men concerning the *Good* and *Evil* of human Actions, is a plain Evidence that God and all other rational Beings are *conſenting* with 'em.

V. And laſtly, that Mens acting *conformably* to theſe Rules of moral Goodneſs, in which they are thus *univerſally conſenting*, hath by long and conſtant Experience been found moſt *conducive* to Mens Welfare and Happineſs. For the Proof whereof I ſhall need urge no other Argument than this, that the great *Deſign* of all human Laws and Conſtitutions hath been to *ſecure* and enforce theſe Rules of *Morality*; which is a plain Argument that Men have always found by *Experience* that they are naturally good, and productive of their Happineſs and Welfare. For how can it be thought, that after Men have had ſo many thouſand years *Trial* of Piety and Juſtice, and Mercy and Temperance, they ſhould ſtill be ſo ſolicitous to *fence* and *guard* 'em with Laws, had they not found 'em highly *advantageous*, and their Contraries as *miſchievous* to Mankind. For do but ſuppoſe, that the Contraries to all Virtue were for *Experiment* ſake impoſed for ſome time upon Mankind, and it were made as Penal by the Laws of Nations to be *Pious* and *Juſt*, *Merciful* and *Temperate*, as it is now to be the contrary; is it imaginable that that, which we now call *Vice*, ſhould in Proceſs of Time acquire the ſame univerſal *Reputation* that Virtue hath always had among Men? Or at leaſt, is it probable that after ſome *thouſand* years Trial and Experience of *ſuch* a Law, Men ſhould ſtill be as much concerned to guard and enforce it, as they are and always have been to ſecure the Laws of Piety and Virtue? No, it is moſt certain they would not. For the very injoyning of *Impiety*, *Injuſtice*, and *Cruelty* would be in effect to injoyn Men to render themſelves moſt *wretched* and *miſerable*: To ſurrender up all the *Supports* of their Hope, the *Peace* of their Conſciences and the *Tranquillity* of their Minds; to live in everlaſting *Broils* and *Diſcords*, and turn *Robbers* and *Cut-throats* to one another, and utterly deprive themſelves of all the *Comforts* and *Securities* of human Society. So that there is no doubt but after a *few* Years Experience of the miſchievous Conſequents of ſuch a Law, the whole World would *groan* under it as an inſupportable Tyranny; and even the moſt *Vicious* would ſoon grow quite *weary* of it, and heartily wiſh that it were for ever *repealed*, and the good old Laws of Piety and Virtue *reſtored* and *enforc'd* upon Mankind. And if ſo, it is plain that Virtue and Vice are diſtinguiſhed by their *Natures* into Good and Evil; and that the Obligations we lie under to *practiſe* the one, and *abſtain* from the other, are not founded in any *arbitrary* Conſtitution, but in the *eſſential* Goodneſs and Malignity that inſeparably adheres to them.

And if we conſult the Experience of *particular* Men, we ſhall always find, that whereas *Impiety* and *Injuſtice*, *Fraud* and *Malice* do naturally *torment* Mens

Minds with Anguish and Confusion, *haunt* their Breasts with fearful Thoughts and dire Expectations, *harrass* their Souls with perpetual Male-contentedness, and *intricate* their whole Lives with everlasting Shifts and Intrigues: *Piety* and *Justice*, *Truth* and *Benevolence* do as naturally *sooth* and *ravish* their Minds, fill 'em with *blessed* Hopes and *chearful* Reflections; *compose* their Passions, *strengthen* and *invigorate* their Hearts, and render the whole Course of their Lives *plain* and *direct*, *even* and *easy*. And hereby Virtue doth sensibly recommend it self to our Natures in all its Capacities, as being suited to the Satisfaction of all its reasonable Desires; and so by Consequence designed to make up the *compleatest* and most *entire* Enjoyment. All which is as plain and obvious to the Reason of Mankind, as any Matter of Fact that is before us: So that 'tis not only the *Reason*, but also the *Experience* of Mankind that universally *agrees* and *consents* in this great Truth, That there is such a Good in *virtuous*, and such an Evil in *vicious* Actions, as doth *eternally* and *inseparably* cleave to their Natures.

And therefore since our Nature is to continue the same for ever; the same *Virtues* and *Vices* which are now the *Perfection* and *Depravation* and consequently the *Happiness* and *Misery* of it, will be so for ever. From whence it necessarily follows, that our eternal *Happiness* and *Misery* is founded in the Course of our own Actions; so that as in the Course of a *virtuous* Life, we are growing up into a State of *fixed* and *everlasting* Virtue, wherein we shall be everlastingly *Perfect* and *Happy*: So on the contrary, in a Course of *vicious* Actions, we are sinking into a State of *everlasting* Viciousness, wherein we shall be everlastingly *wretched* and *miserable*. For since Virtue is *good* for, and Vice *evil* to, us in its own Nature; it necessarily follows, that according as we remain *Virtuous* or *Vicious* for ever, our Condition must be *good* or *evil* for ever. And this being so, of what unspeakable Consequence are the Actions of Men, that thus draw after 'em a Chain of *Joys* or *Woes* as long as Eternity! And how careful ought we to be, to what Course of Life we determine our selves, considering that our *eternal* Fate depends upon what we are now doing: That every moral Action we perform is a Step *Heaven or Hellwards*; that in every bad or good Choice we make, we are planting our *Tophet* or our *Paradise*; and that in the Consequents of our present Actions we shall *rue* or *rejoice* to eternal Ages! Oh would to God Men would at last be so wise as to consider these Things before it be too late, and not live at Random as they do without any Regard to the certain and unavoidable Fate of their own Actions! For doubtless would they but thorowly weigh the *Nature* and *Event* of Things, and look before they leap into Action, they would see infinitely more *Charm* and *Terror* in that *Good* and *Evil* which inseparably adheres to virtuous and vicious Actions, than in all the Temptations in the World. Wherefore in the Name of God let us look about us, and for once resolve to act like Beings that must for ever feel the *bad* or *good* Effects of our own Doings. Which if we do, we shall not only live well and happily here, but to all Eternity experience the Blessed Consequents of it.

SECT. II.

That God hath sufficiently discovered *to us what those human Actions are, which are* morally Good, *and upon that Account*, perpetually Obliging.

THE Truth of which will evidently appear by considering the Particulars; what it is that God hath done in order to the making this great *Discovery* to us; the most considerable of which are reducible to these Six Heads:

First, He hath implanted in us a natural *Desire* of Happiness.

Secondly, He hath given us Reason, to *discern* what Actions they are that make for our Happiness, and what not.

Thirdly, he hath fo contrived our Natures as that we are thruft on by our own *Inftincts* and *Paffions*, to thofe Actions which make for our Happinefs.

Fourthly, He hath taken care to excite and oblige us to thofe Actions by annexing natural *Rewards* to them, and entailing natural *Punifhments* on their Contraries.

Fifthly, To ftrengthen and enforce this Obligation, he hath frequently fuperadded to thefe *natural* Rewards and Punifhments, *fupernatural Bleffings* and *Judgments*.

Sixthly, That to enforce all this, he hath made fundry fupernatural *Revelations*, wherein he hath plainly told us what thofe Things are, that carry with 'em this intrinfick Good and Neceffity.

I. God hath taken care to difcover to us what is morally Good, by implanting in us a natural *Defire* of Happinefs, which is fo infeparable to human Nature, that 'tis *impoffible* for us to forbear defiring what *is* good for us, or at leaft what *appears* fo. For tho thro' our own Ignorance and Inconfideration we many Times miftake *Evil* for *Good*, and *Mifery* for *Happinefs*; yet fuch is the Frame of our Nature, that we cannot defire Evil *as* Evil, or Mifery *as* Mifery; but whenfoever we embrace a *real* Evil, 'tis either under the Notion of a *lefs* Evil, or of a *real* and *fubftantial* Good. Now by this unquenchable *Thirft* and *Defire* of Happinefs which God hath implanted in our Natures, we are continually *importuned* and *excited* to fearch out and inquire by what Ways and Means we may arrive to be happy. So that as *Hunger* and *Thirft* and the Senfe of bodily *Pain* and *Pleafure*, force Men upon the Invention of *Trades* and civil *Occupations* to fupply their Neceffities and Conveniences: So this vehement Hunger and Thirft after Happinefs, which God hath created in our Bofoms, doth almoft *neceffitate* and *conftrain* us to pry into the Nature of our Actions; that fo we may difcover what Trade and Courfe of Life it is, that tends moft directly to our own Felicity. And by thus *importuning* us by our own *felf-love* to inquire into the Nature of our Actions, and into their natural Tendencies to our Weal or Woe, he hath not only expreffed his Good-will towards us, by taking *Security* of our felves for our own Welfare, and obliging us to be happy by the the moft *tender* and *vigorous* Paffion in our Natures; but hath alfo taken an Effectual Courfe to difcover to us the Good and Evil of our own Actions; Confidering,

II. That he hath given us Reafon to *difcern*, what Actions they are that make for our Happinefs, and what not. 'Tis true, had he only implanted in our Breafts a *blind* Defire of Happinefs, without any Eye of Reafon in our Heads to *guide* and *direct* our Actions towards it, we muft have wandered in the Dark for ever, till we had pined away our wretched Beings, with a *hungry* and *unfatisfied* Defire. But by giving us a *quick-fighted* Faculty of Reafon to *guide* and *conduct* this our blind Defire, he hath taken fufficient Care, not only to *excite* our Inquiry after the Way to Happinefs, but alfo to *enable* us to find it. For the natural Tendencies of our Actions to our Happinefs, or Mifery, are fo very *obvious* and *vifible*, that we can fcarce open our Eyes and look abroad without *obferving* them. For how can any Man, who makes any Obfervations upon Things, be fo ftupid as not to *difcern* the vaft Difference there is between *Truth* and *Falfhood*, *Juftice* and *Injuftice*, as to their natural Tendency to the *Good* and *Hurt*, *Happinefs* and *Mifery* of Mankind? 'Tis true, if Men will neglect *ufing* their Reafon, they may be ignorant of the *plaineft* Propofitions; but if they be 'tis their *inexcufable* Folly. But if Men will be fo true to their own Intereft, as calmly to *reflect* upon their Actions, their Senfe cannot more readily diftinguifh between *Honey* and *Gall*, than their Reafon will between *Virtue* and *Vice*; the fundamental Reafons of which are fo *legible* in all the Appearances of Nature, fo neceffary to the Being and Prefervation of Mankind, and their Equity is fo *apparent*, and their Convenience fo *obvious*, that a Man can hardly reflect upon any Thing either *within* or *without* him, without being convinced of their Force and Obligation. So that for a Man that hath the Ufe of his Reafon not

to observe the Difference of his Actions, as to their *intrinsick* Good and Evil, and necessary Tendency to his Happiness and Misery, would be as *gross* and *unexcusable* a Stupidity, as if he should pass thro' the World without ever taking notice that two and two make Four. God therefore by giving us a reasonable Faculty to *discern* the Nature of things, upon which the Differences of Good and Evil are so plainly and *legibly* imprinted, hath hereby taken sufficient Care to shew us the Difference of our own Actions. For, to inspire us with a Faculty of *Reasoning*, by which we can *form* true Notions of Things from single Experiments, and *infer* one Truth from another, and *immediately* to inspire this Faculty with *divine* Truth, are only two different Modes of divine *Revelation*; and God did as *really* reveal himself to us, when he gave us Reason to understand his Will, as when he sent to us his Messengers from Heaven to make known his Mind and Will to us. For God hath so framed our Understandings, as that whensoever we impartially reason about Things, we are *forced* to distinguish between Good and Evil, and cannot persuade our selves without doing infinite *Violence* to our own Faculties; that to *blaspheme* God or to *reverence* him, to *lye* or *speak Truth*, to *honour* our Parents, or to *scorn* and *despise* them, are Things of an indifferent Nature; but as soon as ever we open the Eye of our Reason, we discern such an *essential* Difference between them, as forces us to *condemn* the one and *approve* the other. And accordingly, as for the great Strokes of Iniquity, we find they have as much the universal Judgment of our Reason against them, as any *false Conclusion* in the Mathematicks; whilst the Goodness of their contrary Virtues is as universally acknowledged by us, as the Truth of any *first Principle* in Philosophy. Since therefore God hath so framed our Understanding, as that it cannot calmly reflect upon our Actions without distinguishing between the *good* and *bad*, he hath hereby sufficiently *revealed* to us, what that Good is that *immutably* binds and obliges us.

III. God hath so contrived our Natures, as that we are thrust on by our own *Instincts* and *Passions* to those Actions which are morally Good, and do make for our Happiness. For we are framed and constituted with such Passions and Affections as do naturally *point* and *direct* us unto virtuous Actions; and tho by the Constitution of our Natures, our Passions are subjected to our Reason, and all our Virtue consists in being *reasonably Affected*; yet in the very Nature of our Passions there is a certain *Tendency* and *Direction* to Virtue, antecedent to all our *Reasoning* and *Discourse*. Which *Theognes* the *Pythagorean* stiles Παρόρμησις ϗ Ἐνθουσιασμὸς τὰς κατὰ φύσιν ἀρετᾶς, *a certain natural Impetus or Enthusiasm, by which, without any previous Discourse or Deliberation, we are forcibly carried on towards virtuous Actions.* For some Affections there are in our Nature, which do in the *general* plainly signify to us, that there is such a Thing as moral Good and Evil in human Actions; and others that do as plainly point out *what* those Actions are, wherein this moral Good and Evil is subjected. Of the first Sort are the Affections of Love and Hatred, Complacency and Horror, Glory and Shame, Repentance and Self-satisfaction; which plainly declare that there are *answerable* Objects in the Nature of Things and Actions; that there is a Good to be *beloved*, and an Evil to be *hated*; a Deformity to be *abhorred*, and a Beauty to be *delighted* in; an Excellency to be *gloried in*, and a Filthiness to be *ashamed of*; a Well-doing to be *satisfied with*, and an Ill-doing to be *repented of*. For if there were no such real Distinctions in the Nature of Things and Actions; all these Affections in us would be utterly *vain* and *impertinent*. And as these Affections of our Nature do signify in the *general*, that there is a moral Good and Evil in our Actions; so there are others, which do *particularly* point out *what* Actions are morally Good and what Evil. Thus for Instance, the Passions of *Veneration* and *Disdain* do plainly direct us to honour God and our Superiors, and to be constant in good Courses, out of a generous *Scorn* of all Temptations to the contrary. Thus *Commiseration* and *Envy* direct us to Charity and Justice, to *lament* and *assist* those who are *undeservedly* unfortunate, and to be *displeased* with the Advancement of *base* and *undeserving* People; and consequently to be *just* and *equal* in

in our Distributions, and to *proportion* them to Mens Merit and Desert. For by this Passion of Envy, Nature teaches us that there is such a Thing as *just* and *unjust*, *equal* and *unequal*, and that the former is to be *Embraced*, and the latter to be *Shunned*. And to name no more, thus *Sorrow* and *Joy* do by silent Language dissuade us from *injuring*, and persuade us to *benefit* one another. For so by the mournful Voice, the dejected Eyes and Countenance, the Sighs and Groans and Tears of the *sorrowful* and *oppreſt*, (all which are the powerful Rhetorick of Nature) we are importuned not only to *forbear* heaping any farther Injuries upon them, but also to *commiserate* their Griefs, and by our timely Aids to *succour* and *relieve* them. As on the contrary the florid and chearful Looks, the pleasant and grateful Air, which we behold in those that *rejoice*, are so many Charms and Attractives by which Nature allures us to mutual *Urbanity* and *Sweetness* of Behaviour, and a continual Study to *please* and *gratify* one another. By these and many other Instances I might give, it is evident, that tho by our own ill Government, we too often *deprave* our Affections, and *corrupt* them into Vices; yet their *natural* Drift and Tendency lies towards Virtue. Thus by their own natural Light which they carry before us, they *direct* our Steps to the Way we are to walk in, and point out all those Tracts of eternal Goodness that lead to our Happiness. For since these Affections are in us antecedently to all our Deliberations and Choices, it is evident they were placed there by the *Author* of our Natures; and therefore since 'tis *He*, who hath inclined them to all that they naturally incline to, *He* doth in effect direct and guide us by *their* Inclinations. So that *their* natural Tendencies and Directions are the *Voice of God* in our Natures, which *murmurs* and *whispers* to us that natural Law which our Reason indeed doth more *plainly* and *articulately* promulge. And from this natural Tendency of our Affections to *Good*, proceeds that *pleasant* and *painful* Sense of *good* and *bad* Actions, which we experience in our selves before ever we can discourse. For thus before we are capable of Reasoning our selves into any Pleasure or Displeasure, our Nature is *rejoiced* in a kind or just Action either in ourselves or others; and we are sensibly *pleased* when we have pleasured those that oblige us, and as sensibly *grieved* when we are conscious of having grieved and offended them. We *love* to see those fare well who we imagine have deserved well; and when any unjust Violence is offered them, our Nature *shrinks at*, and *abhors* it. We *pity* and *compassionate* the Miserable when we know not *why*? and are ready to offer at their Relief, when we can give no Reason for it: Which shews that these Things proceed not either from our *Education* or deliberate *Choice*, but from the Nature of our Affections which have a *Sympathy* with Virtue, and an *Antipathy* to Vice implanted in our very Constitution. And hence it is, that in the Beginnings of Sin, our Nature is commonly so *shy* of an evil Action; that it approaches it with such a modest *Coyness*, and goes *blushing* to it like a bashful Virgin to an Adulterer's Bed; that it passes into it with such *Regret* and *Reluctancy*, and looks back upon it with such *Shame* and *Confusion*; which in our tender Years, when as yet we are not arrived to the Exercise of our Understandings, cannot be supposed to proceed from *Reason* and *Conscience*, and therefore must be from the *natural* Sense of our Affections, which by these and such like Indications do signify that they are *violated* and *offended*. Now this natural Sense of Good and Evil which springs from the *Frame* and *Nature* of our Affections, was doubtless intended by God to be the *first* Guide of human Nature; that so, when as yet 'tis not capable of following Reason and Conscience, it might be directed to what is Good, and be preserved from wicked Habits and Prejudices by its own *Sense* and *Feeling*, till such Time as it is Capable of the Conduct of Reason: That so when this leading Faculty undertakes the Charge of it, it may find it *pliant* and *obsequious* to its *Dictates*; and be able to manage it with more *Ease* and *Facility*. And thus by the natural Drift and Tendency of our Affections, God hath plainly *revealed* to us what is good and what not.

IV. God

IV. God hath also entailed upon our Actions natural *Rewards* and *Punishments*, and thereby plainly declared which are *good* and which *evil*. For it is easily demonstrable by an Induction of Particulars, that every Virtue hath some natural Efficacy in it to advance both our *publick* Good and our *private* Interest; That *Temperance* and *Charity*, *Righteousness* and *Fidelity*, *Gratitude* and *Humility* are not only *convenient*, but absolutely *necessary* to our Joy and Comfort, our Peace and Quietness, our Safety and Contentment; to the Health of our *Body* and the Satisfaction of our *Mind*, and the Security and Happiness of our *Society* with one another. Whereas on the contrary, Vice naturally teems with *mischievous* Effects, and is ever productive of *Horror* in the Conscience, *Anguish* in the Mind, *Discord* in the Affections, *Diseases* in the Body, and *Confusions* and *Disturbances* in human Society. Since therefore the divine Wisdom and Contrivance hath thus inseparably coupled good Effects to good Actions, and evil ones to evil, it hath hereby very *plainly* and *sensibly* declared to us, what it would have us *do* and what *not*. For seeing it hath so constituted Things, as that in the Course of Nature such Proportions of *Happiness* do necessarily result to us from *such* Actions, and such Proportions of *Misery* from their *Contraries*, what can be more evident than that its design was hereby to *encourage* us to the one, and *affright* us from the other? So that by these *natural* Rewards and Punishments, which in the Course of Things God hath chained to our Actions, he hath as *expresly* prescribed us what to do, and what not, as he could have done if he had spoken to us in an *audible* Voice from the Battlements of Heaven. For since the whole Train of natural Effects is to be resolved into the *Providence* of God, and since his Providence hath so *ordered* and *contrived* Things, as that in the ordinary Course of them *good* Effects do spring out of *good* Actions, and *evil* out of *evil* ones, what else could he intend by it but to *allure* us to the one, and *terrify* us from the other? For it is by *Rewards* and *Punishments* that all Lawgivers declare their Will and Pleasure concerning those Actions which they *command* and *forbid*? And therefore since God in his providential Government of the World, hath thought good to link natural *Rewards* to *such* Actions, and natural *Punishments* to *such*; these are to be look'd upon as the great *Sanctions* of the Law of Nature, whereby he commands what *pleases*, and prohibits what *displeases* him. For when God hath no otherwise revealed himself to the World than only by the establish'd *Course* and *Nature* of Things, *that* was the great *Bible* by which alone Mankind, was instructed in their Duty; and there being no *revealed* Threats or Promises annexed to good and bad Actions, God's Will and Pleasure concerning them was *visible* only in the *good* and *bad* Consequents which they drew after them; which are so *plain* and *obvious* to the Observation of Mankind, that 'twould be the most *inexcusable* Inadvertency not to take notice of them. So that the *moral* Good and Evil of all Actions finally resolves into the natural Good and Evil that is appendent to them; and therefore are our Actions morally *Good*, because they are naturally *beneficial* to us, and therefore morally *Evil*, because they are naturally *prejudicial* and *hurtful*; and those which in their own Nature are neither Good nor Evil, are *indifferent* in themselves, and left altogether *undetermined* by the Law of Nature, which *commands* and *forbids* nothing but under the Sanction of those *natural* Rewards and Punishments, which in the Course of Things are made necessary to human Actions.

V. To these *natural* Rewards and Punishments which God hath entailed upon good and bad Actions, he hath thought good many Times to superadd *supernatural Blessings* and *Judgments*. For tho he had before sufficiently expressed his Will concerning human Actions in the great *Bible of Nature*, and by their *natural* Effects had plainly enough distinguished the *good* from the *bad*; yet considering what *heedless* and *inobservant* Creatures we are, and how apt to *overlook* the ordinary Consequents of our Actions, he hath not altogether abandoned us to the easy Instructions of Nature, but out of his superabundant Care to shew us what is Good, and lead us to our Duty and Happiness, he hath from

Time

Time to Time seconded the *natural* Rewards and Punishments of our Actions with *supernatural Favours* and *Judgments*; that so by these he might awake our *drowsy* Attention, and revive in us the *languishing* Sense of our Duty. Of which we have infinite Instances in the *several Ages* of the *World*; there being scarce any History either Sacred or Profane that abounds not with them. Several of which, both Blessings and Judgments, do as *plainly* evince themselves to be *intended* by God for *Rewards* and *Punishments*, as if they had been attended with a Voice from Heaven, proclaiming the Reasons for which they were sent. For how many famous Instances have we of miraculous *Deliverances* of *righteous* Persons, who by an *invisible* Hand have been *rescued* from the greatest Dangers, when in all outward appearance their Condition was *hopeless* and *desperate*; and of wonderful *Blessings* that have happened to them, not only *without* but contrary to all secondary Causes; of some that have been so eminently rewarded *in kind*, as that the Goods which they *received* were most visible Significations of the Goods which they *did*; of others who have *received* the Blessings which they have asked, *whilst* they were *praying* for them, and obtained them with such *distinguishing* Circumstances, as plainly signified them to be the *Answers* and *Returns* of their devout Addresses to Heaven? And so on the contrary, how many *notable* Examples are there of such miraculous *Judgments* inflicted upon *unrighteous* Persons, as have either *exceeded* the Power of secondary Causes, or been caused by them *contrary* to their *natural* Tendencies? of Men that have been punished in the very *Act* of their Sin, and sometimes in the very *Part* by which they have offended; that have had the evil of their *Sin* retaliated upon them in a *correspondent* Evil of *Suffering*, and been *struck* with those very *Judgments*, which they have *imprecated* on themselves in the Justification of a known Falshood? All which *supernatural* Judgments and Blessings of God, are only his *Comments* on the *Text* of Nature, by which he further explains to us the *Meaning* of those *natural* Rewards and Punishments, which Virtue and Vice draw after them, and shews us what clear *Indications* they are of his Almighty *Pleasure* and *Displeasure*. For when he *rewards* Men *supernaturally*, it is for those Actions that carry a *natural* Reward with them; and when he *punishes* them *supernaturally*, it is for such Actions as do carry a *natural* Punishment with them: So that his *supernatural* Rewards and Punishments do speak the *same* Sense and Language with his *natural*, only they speak *plainer* and *louder*, to rowze and awake those *stupid* Souls, that are *deaf* to, and *regardless* of the soft and still Voice of *natural* Rewards and Punishments. Thus when the old World, by not attending to the *natural Consequents* of their own Actions, had almost extinguished their Sense of Good and Evil; God by a *supernatural Deluge*, in which he drowned the *Wicked* and preserved the *Righteous*, consigned to all future Generations a *standing Monument* of his *Hatred* of *Sin*, and *Love* of *Righteousness*: That so by the *Remembrance* of it, he might keep Mens *heedless Minds* more attentive to the *natural Rewards* and Punishments of their Actions. And when the Remembrance of *this* was almost *worn out*, and with it Mens *natural* Sense of Good and Evil; God by *raining down* Fire and Brimstone upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and *rescuing* the righteous *Lot* from that dire Conflagration, alarm'd the World with a new *Declaration* of the wide Distinction he makes between Virtue and Vice. And lastly, when the Virtue of these great Examples was almost *spent*, God raised up the People of *Israel*, and by the miraculous *Blessings* he bestowed on them when they did *well*, and the stupendous *Judgments* he inflicted when they did *wickedly*, exposed them to all the Nations round about for a standing *Demonstration* of the vast Difference he makes between Good and Evil. For so the Psalmist tells us, *Psalm* 98. ver. 2. compared with *Psalm* 102. ver. 15. *The Lord hath made known his Salvation, his Righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the Heathen; that the Heathen might fear the Name of the Lord, and all the Kings of the Earth his Glory.* Thus by frequent Examples of *supernatural* Rewards and Punishments, God hath been always *instructing* the degenerate *World* in the essential Differences between Good and Evil.

VI. And

VI. And lastly, To enforce all this God hath made sundry supernatural *Revelations*, wherein he hath plainly instructed us what Actions are *Good*, and what *Evil*. That he hath made sundry *Revelations* to the World is evident in the Fact, because there are sundry Revelations *extant*, which by those many miraculous Effects of the Divine *Power* that attended the Ministration of them, have been sufficiently demonstrated to be of a *Divine Original*. And such are those contained in the five Books of *Moses*, and the *Prophets*, which have been all most amply *confirmed*, both by the *Miracles* which were wrought by their inspired Authors, and the exact *Accomplishment* of the several *Predictions* contained in them. And such is also the *last* and *best* Revelation contained in the *New Testament*; which both by the *Types* and *Predictions* of the *Law* and *Prophets*, and the infinite *Miracles* wrought by *Jesus* and his Followers, together with its own *Inherent* Wisdom and Goodness, hath been so effectually proved a *Divine Revelation*, that nothing but Ignorance or inveterate Prejudice can cause any Man to *disbelieve* or *suspect* it.

Now if you consult these several Revelations, you will find, that the main Drift and Design of them is to *detect* and *expose* what is morally Evil, and *explain* and *recommend* to us what is morally Good. For thus the several Revelations made to *Abraham* and his Children, were only so many *Repetitions* of that *Covenant of Righteousness* which God had struck with them, to encourage them to persevere in well-doing. Thus the Law of *Moses* consisted partly of *Ceremonial Rites*, which were either intended for Divine *Hieroglyphicks* to instruct that *dull* and *stupid* People in the Principles of inward Purity and Goodness, or else for *Types* and *Figures* of the holy Mysteries of the Gospel; and partly of Precepts of *Morality*, together with some few of *Policy*, suited to the Genius of that People; and partly of such *Promises* and *Threats* as were judged most apt to oblige them to the Practice of Piety. And as for the *Prophets*, the Substance of their Revelations was either *Reprehensions* of Sin, together with severe *Denunciations* against it; or *Invitations* to Virtue and Piety, together with gracious *Promises* to encourage them to practise it; or *Predictions* of the *Messias*, and of that *everlasting Righteousness* which was to be introduced by him. And then as for the *Gospel*, all the Duty of it consists either in *Instances*, or *Means* and *Instruments* of Moral Goodness; and all the *Doctrines* of it are nothing but powerful *Arguments* to oblige us to the Practice of those Duties. Thus the great Intendment of all God's Revelations is to *explain* and *enforce* the Duties of Morality; to discover the *Nature*, and lead us on to the *Practice* of them by the most powerful Obligations. And in this most perfect *Map* of the Road to Happiness, all the *Tracts* of Piety and Virtue are so plainly *described* and *delineated* to us, that no Man can possibly *miss* his Way, that sincerely *enquires* after it. For tho in Matters of *Opinion* Men may be *innocently* misled and deceived, yet there is no Article either of *Doctrine* or *Duty*, upon which our Happiness necessarily depends, wherein it is possible for an *honest* and *diligent* Mind to be mistaken. And thus you see by how many excellent Ways God hath *discovered* to us which of our Actions are Good, and which Evil: So that if, after all this, we proceed in any sinful and immoral Courses, we are utterly *inexcusable*. For if after God hath thus *plainly* made known his Will to us, we still persist to contradict it in our *Practice*, we do thereby in effect declare, that we *regard not* the Almighty, and that we will *do* what we list, let him *will* what he pleases. And what an unpardonable Insolence is it for us, who depend upon his Breath, and hang upon his Providence every moment, to treat him as if he had nothing to do with us, and were the meerest *Cypher* and most *insignificant* Being in the World? For tho 'tis true he hath not made so *full* a Discovery of his Will to *some* as to *others*, yet he hath so *sufficiently* discovered it to *all*, that none can pretend to the Excuse either of *invincible* or *unaffected* Ignorance. For as for the Heathen, tho they have no Revelation of God's Will *without* them, yet

they

they have the Bible of Confcience *within* them, and the large and legible Bible of Nature that lies continually open before them, in which they may eafily read the *Principal* Differences between Good and Evil, and all the great Principles of Morality. And if notwithftanding this they will be fo regardlefs of God as not to *attend* to and *comply* with thofe natural Difcoveries of his Will, what Pretence can be made for them, why they fhould not perifh for ever in their Obftinacy? For as the Apoftle tells us, *tho they had not the Law*, that is, the revealed Law, *yet they did*, or at leaft might have done, *by nature the Things contained in the Law*; *and therefore as many of them*, faith he, *as finned without* this revealed *Law*, *fhall perifh without the Law*, that is, by the Sentence of the Law of Nature, *Rom.* 2. 12, 14. And then as for the *Jews*, befides thofe *natural* Indications of God's Will which they had in common with the Heathen, they had fundry *fupernatural* Ones; they had fundry great and notorious Examples of God's *rewarding* good Men, and *punifhing* bad; and befides, they had the Law of *Mofes*, the *Moral* part of which was but a *new Edition* of the Law of Nature; as for the *Ceremonial* Part of it, it was thought an *obfcure*, yet an *intelligible* Reprefentation of all thofe fublime Motives to Piety and Virtue, which the Gofpel more *plainly* propofes. So that would the *Jews* but have heedfully attended either to the *fpiritual Senfe* of their Law, or to the *Sermons* of their *Prophets* which very much *cleared* and *explained* it, they could not have been ignorant either of any material Part of their *Duty*, or of any confiderable *Motive* by which it is preffed and enforced. And if notwithftanding they would be fo *regardlefs* of God, as to take no notice of his *Judgments* and *Mercies*; fo rude to his Authority, as not to mind either his Law *within*, or his Law *without* them, upon what reafonable Pretence can they excufe themfelves? But then as for us *Chriftians*, we have not only all thofe *natural* Difcoveries of our Duty which the *Heathen* had, and all thofe *fupernatural* ones which the *Jews* had, but a great deal more. For in our Revelation the *Laws* and *Motives* of Virtue are fet before us in a much *clearer* Light, and are neither wrapt up in *Myftical* Senfes, nor overcaft with *Typical* Reprefentations, but laid before us in the moft plain and eafy Propofitions. For that which was the *Myftical* Senfe of the *Jewifh* Law, is the *Literal* Senfe of the *Chriftian*; in which all thofe Precepts, and Promifes, and Threats, which were delivered to the *Jews* in *dark* Riddles, *Obfcure* and *Typical* Adumbrations, are brought forth to us from behind the Curtain, and propofed in plain and popular Articles. So that if we ftill continue in our finful Courfes, we are of all Men the moft *inexcufable*. The Heathen may plead againft the *Jews*, that *their* Law of Nature was not fo clear in its Precepts, nor yet fo *cogent* in its Motives, as the Law of *Mofes*: the *Jews* may plead againft us Chriftians, that *their* Law of *Mofes* was neither fo *exprefs* in the Precepts, nor yet fo *intelligible* in its beft and moft powerful Motives, as *our* Gofpel; but as for us Chriftians, we have nothing to plead, but by our own Obftinacy againft the *cleareft* Difcoveries of our Duty, do ftand condemned to everlafting Silence. So that when it fhall appear, at the dread Tribunal of God, that we have perfifted in our Wickednefs notwithftanding all *thefe* Advantages, we muft expect to be *reproached* by all the Reafonable World, to be *exploded* and *hiffed at*, not only by Saints and Angels, but by the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and the Devils themfelves, who will all confpire with our own Confciences, to *fecond* our woful *Doom* with the loud Acclamation of *Juft and Righteous art thou, O Lord, in all thy Ways.* Wherefore as we would not perifh for ever without *Pity* and *Excufe*, let us make hafte to forfake *all Ungodlinefs and Worldly Lufts, and to live foberly, and righteoufly, and godly in this prefent World.*

SECT. III.

That those Actions, which carry with them this perpetual Obligation, are the Main *and* Principal *Parts of Religion.*

THE Truth of which is most evident from the above-named Text, *Mic.* 6. 8. *And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* Which Interrogation tho' it implies not an *absolute* Negation, *viz.* that the Lord required *nothing else* of them, (for under the Law he required *Sacrifices*, and sundry other positive Duties, as under the Gospel he requires *Sacraments*, and *Reading* and *Hearing* his holy Word, &c. which are *positive Duties*, as well as those *Legal Institutions* of *Moses*;) yet it plainly implies a *comparative* Negation, *viz.* that the Lord requires nothing else so *Principally* and *Affectionately*, so for the sake of *Things themselves*, and upon the account of their own *Inherent* Beauty and Goodness, as he doth these Moral Duties here specified. He did indeed *require* the *Jews* to offer *Sacrifice* to him, and to perform those other *Ceremonial Rites* specified in the Law of *Moses*; and for them wilfully to have neglected those Duties, would have been such an avowed Defiance to his Authority, as would have render'd them justly obnoxious to all the Judgments threatned in their Law; but yet he did much more *earnestly* require them to be *Just* and *Merciful* and *Humble*, and manifested himself to be far better pleased with *one* Act of Moral Goodness, than with a *Thousand* Sacrifices. And thus he requires of us *Christians*, that we should communicate with him, and with one another in our *Evangelical Sacraments*, and dutifully conform to all those Sacred *Institutions* and *Solemnities* of Religion which are contained in the Gospel; and if we wilfully neglect them, we justly incur all that everlasting *Vengeance* which is there denounced; but yet our sincere *Compliance* with the *immutable* Obligations of Piety and Virtue, is a Thousandfold *more* acceptable to God, than our strictest Observation of these his *Positive* Institutions. So that the Question in the Text, *What doth the Lord require of thee?* plainly implies this Proposition, That tho God doth exact of us certain *Duties* which are *not* Moral, *i. e.* have no *Intrinsick* Necessity in them, yet it is the Moral Duties, such as *Justice* and *Mercy* and *Humility*, which he Principally requires at our Hand. Thus concerning *Sacrifice*, God plainly tells us, *I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice*, i. e. I will have Mercy *rather* than Sacrifice, *Hos.* 6. 6. And the Wise Man assures us, that *to do Justice, is more acceptable to the Lord than Sacrifice*, Prov. 21. 3. And to the same purpose our Saviour himself pronounceth, even before that Ceremonial Worship was abolished, That *to love the Lord with all our Heart, with all our Understanding, with all our Soul, and with all our Strength, and to love our Neighbour as our selves, is more than all Burnt-offerings and Sacrifices*, Mark 12. 33. But for the clearer Demonstration of this great and necessary Truth, I shall endeavour, First, To prove the *Truth* of it by some Scripture Arguments. Secondly, to assign the *Reasons* of it. As for the *Proof* of it, the following Particulars will be abundantly sufficient.

First, That the Scripture plainly declares, that the great *Design* of all the *Doctrinals* of Religion hath always been, to *move* and *persuade* Men to the Practice of Moral Goodness.

Secondly, That the main *Drift* and *Scope* of all the *Positive* Duties of Religion, hath been always to *Improve* and *Perfect* Men in Moral Goodness.

Thirdly, That God expresses in Scripture a great *Contempt* of all the *Positive* Duties of Religion, whenever they are *separated* from Moral Goodness.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, That where-ever we find the *Whole* of Religion *summ'd up* in a few Particulars, they are always such as are Instances of Moral Goodness.

Fifthly, That where-ever such *Persons* as have been most *dear* and *acceptable* to God are *described* in Scripture, their *Character* always consists of some Instances or other of Moral Goodness.

Sixthly, That the Scripture plainly declares, that at the *great Account* between God and our Souls, the main *Inquisition* will be concerning our Moral Good or Evil.

I. The Scripture expresly declares, that the great *Design* of the *Doctrines* of *Religion*, is to *move* and *persuade* Men to Moral Goodness. For so the Apostle speaking of the *Grace of God*, i. e. the Gospel, assures us that its great *Design* is, *to teach Men to deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World*, Titus 2. 12. And if we consider the Doctrines in *Particular*, we shall find that they all conspire in this great Design. For so the Doctrine of *eternal Life* is proposed by God, to persuade us to *cleanse our selves from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, and to perfect Holiness in the Fear of God*, 2 Cor. 7. 1. So also the Doctrine of our *future Punishment* is levell'd against *all Unrighteousness and Ungodliness of Men*, Rom. 1. 18. And as for those Doctrines which concern the *Transactions* of our Saviour, they are all proposed to us as *Arguments* to persuade us to Piety and Virtue. For 'twas *for this Cause that Christ was manifested, to destroy the Works of the Devil*, 1 John 3. 8. 'Twas for this purpose that *he bore our Sins in his own Body on the Tree, that we being dead to Sin should live to Righteousness*, 1 Pet. 2. 24. 'Twas for this End that he *rose from the Dead*, that thereby he might prevail with us to *walk in newness of Life*, Rom. 6. 4. and 'tis for this end that he *intercedes for us* at the Right-hand of God, that thereby he might encourage us *to come to God by him*, Heb. 7. 2. and in a Word, for this Cause he hath told us, he will *come to Judgment*, to reward every Man according to his Works, that thereby he might stir us up to Sobriety, and Vigilance, and to *all holy Conversation and Godliness*, Mat. 24. 42. compared with 2 *Pet.* 3. ver. 11. Thus you see, all the Doctrines of Religion are only so many *Topicks* of Divine *Persuasion*, whereby God addresses himself to our *Hope* and *Fear*, and every other *Affection* in us that is capable of Persuasion, to *excite* us to comply with the eternal Obligations of Morality; and there is no one *Article* in all our Religion, that is matter of mere *Speculation*, or that entertains our Minds with *dry* and *empty* Notions that have no Influence on our *Wills* and *Affections*. For since the Design of Religion in *general*, is to *bind* and *fasten* our Souls to God, we may be sure that there is no *Part* of it but what doth in some measure contribute hereunto. Since therefore 'tis Moral Goodness that God chiefly recommends to us by the Persuasions of Religion, we may be sure that what his *Arguments* do chiefly *persuade* us to, that his *Commands* do chiefly *oblige* us to.

II. From Scripture it is also evident, that the main *Drift* and *Scope* of all the *positive* Duties of Religion, is to *improve* and *perfect* Men in moral Goodness. We find the *Jewish* Religion exceedingly abounded with *positive* Precepts; for *such* were all those sacred *Rites* and *Solemnities* of which the *Bark* and *Outside* of that Religion consisted; of all which 'tis true what the *Psalmist* saith of *Sacrifices* in particular, *thou desirest not Sacrifices, thou delightest not in Burnt offerings*, Psalm 51. 16. that is, thou takest no delight in them, upon the Score of any *internal* Goodness that is in them, but desirest them merely as they are *instituted Means* and *Instruments* of moral Goodness. For so many of the Rites of the *Mosaic* Law were instituted in Opposition to the *Magical, Unclean* and *Idolatrous* Rites of the *Eastern* Heathen. As particularly, that Prohibition *of sowing their Fields with mingled Seed*, Lev. 19. 19. in opposition to that *magical* Rite which the Heathens used as a *Charm* for Fructification. So also that Command of

ſprinkling the Blood of their Sacrifices upon the Ground like *Water*, and covering it with *Duſt*, in oppoſition to that *idolatrous* Rite of gathering the Blood into a *Trench* or *Veſſel*, and then *ſitting round* it in a Circle, whilſt they imagined their Gods to be *licking* it up. And to name no more of this Kind, the Prohibytion of *ſeething a Kid in his Mother's Milk*, Exod. 23. 19. was in Oppoſition to a Cuſtom of the antient Heathens, who at the *Ingathering* of their Fruits were wont to take a Kid and ſeeth it in the Milk of its Dam, and then in a *magical Proceſſion* to ſprinkle all their *Trees* and *Fields* and *Gardens* with it, thereby to render them more fruitful the following Year. Beſides all which, you may find a World of other Inſtances in *Maimonides, More Nevoch. l.* 3. who tells us, that the Knowledge of the Opinions and Cuſtoms of theſe *Eaſtern* Heathens was, *porta magna ad reddendas præceptorum cauſas, the great Rationale of the Moſaic Precepts*; and that *multarum legum rationes & cauſæ mihi innotuerint ex cognitione ſidei rituum & cultus Zabiorum*, i. e. *that by being acquainted with the Opinions and Cuſtoms of thoſe Eaſtern Heathens, he underſtood the Grounds and Reaſons of many of the Laws of* Moſes, *More Nevoch. lib.* 3. *cap.* 29. So that tho theſe Precepts were *not* Moral, yet were they ſet up as ſo many *Fences* by God to keep his People from *ſtraggling* into thoſe heatheniſh Immoralities.

Again, There are *other* Rites of their Religion, which were inſtituted to *ſhadow* out the *holy Myſteries* of the *Goſpel*; the great *Deſign* of which *Myſteries*, was to *invite* and *perſuade* Men to comply with the eternal Laws of Morality. Thus their Laws of *Sacrifice* were inſtituted to *repreſent* to them the great Tranſactions of their future *Meſſias*; his Incarnation and immaculate Life, his *Death* and *Reſurrection, Aſcenſion* and *Interceſſion* at the Right-hand of God. So alſo their *feſtival Laws*, and particularly their *Laws* of *Jubilee*, were made to *ſhadow* out the Doctrines of our *Redemption* and *eternal Life*; and their pouring out *Water* in their Sacrifices, and their ritual *Purgations* from Uncleanneſs, were intended for obſcure *Intimations* of the *Effuſion* of the Holy Spirit, and the Doctrine of *Remiſſion of Sins*; all which Doctrines carry with them the moſt *pregnant* Invitations to Piety and Virtue.

Laſtly, There are other Rites of that Law, which were appointed to *inſtruct* them in moral Duties. For God finding them not only a *perverſe*, but a *dull* and *ſottiſh* People, as thoſe generally are that have been born and bred in *Slavery*, apprehended that the moſt effectual way to inſtruct them, would be by *Signs* and material *Repreſentations*, even as Parents do their Children by *Pictures*. And accordingly in *Iſa.* 28. 10. he tells us, that *he gave them line upon line, and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, with a ſtammering Tongue*; i. e. he looked upon them as *Children*, and ſo condeſcended to their *Weakneſs*, and ſpake to them in their own *Dialect*. And this way of inſtructing them by *outward* and *viſible* Signs, being much in uſe in the *Eaſtern* Countries, and more eſpecially in *Egypt*, whoſe manners they were infinitely *fond* of, was of all others the moſt *probable* and *taking*. And accordingly a great Part of the Jewiſh Rites conſiſted of *Hieroglyphicks*, or *viſible Signs*, by which their *minds* were inſtructed in the Precepts of *Morality*. Thus by *Circumciſion*, God ſignified to them the Neceſſity of *mortifying* their *unchaſte* Deſires; by their *Legal Waſhings*, he intimated to them their Obligation to *cleanſe* themſelves from all *Impurities* of Fleſh and Spirit; yea this, as St. *Barnabas* in his Epiſtle tells us, was the Intent of all that Difference of *Meats* in the Jewiſh Law, which pronounced *Swine's Fleſh unclean*, to inſtruct them not to live like Hogs, that *wallow* in the Mire while they are *full*, and *whine* and *clamour* when they are *empty*; which forbid them to feed on *Eagles* and other Birds of *Prey*, to inſtruct them to live by *honeſt Induſtry*, and not by *Rapine*; which prohibits Fiſh without *Scales*, that generally live in the *Mud*, to teach the Evil of *Senſuality* and *Earthly-mindedneſs*, &c. From all which it is evident, that Moral Goodneſs was the conſtant *Mark*, at which all the poſitive Precepts of their Law were *levelled*.

And then as for the *Chriſtian* Religion, all the *poſitive* Precepts it contains are directed to the *ſame* end. It requires us to *believe* in Jeſus Chriſt, and in his Me-

diation to *draw near unto God*; the Design of which *Faith*, it expresly tells us, is to *sanctify our Natures*, Acts 26. 18. and to *purify our Hearts*, Acts 15. 9. It injoins us to be *baptized* into the Name of Jesus; and, for what Purpose? but to oblige us thereby to *die to sin, and to walk in newness of life*, Rom. 6. 4. It requires us to *commemorate* our Saviour's Passion in a *sacramental Communion* of his Body and Blood; and to what End? but only to excite us to *Love* and *Thankfulness* to God, and *Charity* towards one another, 1 *Cor*. 5. 7, 8. In a Word, it requires us to live in *Unity* with the *Church*, and not to *separate* ourselves from her sacred Assemblies; and for what other Reason? but that we might become *an holy Temple, and an Habitation of God*, by being *compacted* together into an *uniform and regular* Society, *Ephes*. 2. 21, 22. Since therefore, all the Precepts both of the *Old* and *New Testament*, which are *purely positive*, do bear a *Respect* to moral Goodness, and were imposed by God in *subserviency* thereunto, it is evident that That is the *principal* Mark which he *designs* and *aims* at.

III. Another Evidence from Scripture, That moral Goodness is the *principal* Matter of our Duty, is the great *Contempt* which God expresses of the *positive* Duties of Religion, whenever they are *separated* from moral Goodness. For thus, concerning the Positives of the *Jewish* Religion, we are told, That *the Sacrifice of the Wicked is an Abomination to the Lord*, Prov. 15. 8. and, concerning the *Whole* of their *positive* Religion, the Prophet thus pronounces, in the Name of God, *To what purpose is the Multitude of your Sacrifices to me, saith the Lord? I am full of the Burnt-Offerings of Rams, and of the Fat of fed Beasts*, i. e. so full as that I loath them; *and I delight not in the Blood of Bullocks, or of Lambs, or of He-Goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required these Things at your Hands, to tread my Courts? bring no more vain Oblations; Incense is an abomination to me; the new Moons and Sabbaths, the Calling of Assemblies I cannot away with; it is Iniquity, even the solemn Meetings. Your new Moons, and your appointed Feasts my Soul hateth, they are a Trouble to me, I am weary to bear them: And when you spread forth your Hands, I will hide mine Eyes; yea, when ye make many Prayers, I will not hear.* And what, I beseech you, is the Reason that God should thus dislike his *own* Institutions? Why, he plainly tells you, *your Hands are full of Blood*, your *Cruelty* and *Oppression* doth *profane* your Worship, and turn it all into *Impiety*, Isa. 1. 11. to the 16th; for so, *Isa*. 66. 3. he plainly tells them, *He that killeth an Ox, is as if he slew a Man; he that sacrificeth a Lamb, as if he cut off a Dog's Neck; he that offereth an Oblation, as if he offered Swine's Blood; he that burneth Incense, as if he blessed an Idol*; and, why so? why, *they have chosen their own Ways*, i. e. of Impiety and Wickedness, and *their Soul delighteth in their Abominations.* Nor doth God express a less *Contempt* of the Positives of Christianity, when *separated* from moral Goodness: For thus St. *James* tells us, even of our *Faith* or *Belief* in Jesus, that *without Works it is dead*; that it is a *senseless*, *squalid* Thing, that hath neither *Life* nor *Beauty* in it, *James* 2. 17. and St. *Peter* compares *Baptism* to *the Washing of a Swine*, when it is separated from Purity of Life and Manners, 2 *Pet*. 2. 22. and our receiving the *Lord's Supper*, without Charity and Devotion, is by St. *Paul* stiled, *coming together to condemnation*, 1 Cor. 11. 34. all which is a plain Demonstration, that moral Goodness is the *principal* Matter that God insists on; since 'twas *this* that *sanctified* the Sacrifices of the *Jews*, and *crowned* all their ceremonial Observances with the divine Acceptation, and without this, all their other Services were *noisome* and *offensive* to him; and it is this that *perfumes* our Faith and our Sacraments, our Prayers and religious Assemblies, and renders them a *grateful* and *sweet-smelling Savour* in the Nostrils of God, and *without* this, they are all a hateful *Stench* and *Annoyance* to him. Doubtless, therefore, the *principal* Matter of Duty which God requires of us, is that which he esteems the *Grace* and *Fragrancy* of all our other Duties.

IV. Another Evidence from Scripture, That moral Goodness is the principal Matter that God requires of us, is, that where-ever we find the *Whole* of Religion *summ'd up* in a few Particulars, they are always such as are *Parts* and

Instance

Instances of moral Goodness. Thus, in the above-cited *Mic.* 6. *What doth the Lord require of thee? but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.* Thus also the Prophet *Isaiah*, giving an Account to his People, what they were to do, in order to their reconciliation with God, thus directs them, *Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the Evil of your Doings from before mine Eyes, cease to do Evil, learn to do Well, seek Judgment, relieve the Oppressed, judge the Fatherless, plead for the Widow; come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord*, Isa. 1. 16, 17, 18. So also our blessed Saviour sums up the *Whole Duty of Man* into two Particulars: And what are they? Why, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind; this is the first and great Commandment. And the Second is like to it, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy Self; on these two Commandments hang the Law and the Prophets*, Mat. 22. 37, 38, 39, 40. Thus, St *James*, *True Religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the Fatherless and Widows in their Affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the World*, Jam. 1. 27. And elsewhere the Apostle *sums up* the whole Law into one leading *Head* of Morality, and that is *Love*; *for Love*, saith he, *is the fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. 13. 10. So this Observation generally holds true, that in all these *Summaries* of Duty mentioned in the Holy Scripture, only *such* Duties are taken notice of, as are *Parts* and *Instances* of Morality; which is a plain Demonstration, that 'tis this which God principally *requires*, since 'tis this which he most *takes notice of*; and it may be reasonably suppos'd that in those Summaries of our Duty, wherein but a *few* Parts are enumerated, they are such as are the *Chief* and *Principal*; it being contrary to all Rules of Language, to express the *Whole* of any Thing, by the *meanest* and most *inconsiderable* Parts of it.

V. Another Evidence from Scripture, that moral Goodness is the *principal* Matter of Duty that God requires of us, is, that wheresoever such *Persons* as have been most *dear* and *acceptable* to God are *described*, their *Character* is always made up of Instances of Morality. Thus the Description of *Job* is, *that he was a Man perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed Evil*, Job 1. 1. And in the 15th *Psalm*, the Description which *David* gives of the Man who should abide in the Tabernacle of the Lord, is this, that *he walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart; that he backbiteth not with his Tongue, nor doth evil to his Neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his Neighbour*, &c. *He that doth these things*, saith he, *shall never be moved:* And the greatest Character that is given of *Moses*, the *Darling* and *Favourite* of God, is, that *he was very meek above all the men that were upon the face of the Earth*, Numb. 12. 3. Thus also the Character of *Cornelius*, by which he was so *endeared* to God, is, that *he was a just and devout man, one that feared God with all his house, who gave much Alms to the People, and prayed to God always*, Acts 10. 2. And, in a Word, the *general* Character of those whom God *accepts*, is, *in every Nation, he who doth righteousness is accepted of God*, Acts 10. 35. Thus moral Goodness is the great *Stamp* and *Impress* that renders Men *current* in the Esteem of God; whereas, on the contrary, the common *Brand* by which *Hypocrites* and *false Pretenders* to Religion are *stigmatiz'd*, is, their being zealous for the *Positives*, and *cold* and *indifferent* as to the *Morals* of Religion. For so our Saviour characters the Pharisees, *Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites; for ye pay tythe of Mint, Anise, and Cummin*, which yet was a *positive* Duty, *and have omitted the weightier matters of the Law, Judgment, Mercy, and Faithfulness; these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind Guides, ye strain at a Gnat, and swallow a Camel*, Mat. 23. 23, 24. plainly implying the Morals of Religion to exceed the Positives in *Weight* and *Moment*, as much as a Camel does a Gnat in *Bulk*. Since, therefore, moral Goodness is always *mentioned* as the great Character of God's *Favourites*, and the Neglect of it, out of a pretended Zeal to the *positive* Duties of Religion, is always *recorded* as a Mark of the most odious *Hypocrites*; this is a sufficient Argument, how high a *Value* God sets upon the Moralities of Religion.

VI. And lastly, Another Evidence from Scripture, that moral Goodness is the *principal* Part of Religion, is, That at the great *Account* between God and

us,

us, his main *Inquisition* will be concerning such Actions as are *morally* good or evil. For so *Rom.* 2. 6. We are told, that God will *render to every Man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for honour and glory, and immortality, eternal Life. But to them who are contentious, and do not obey the Truth, but obey uurighteousness, tribulation and wrath, indignation and anguish.* And accordingly *Enoch*, as he is quoted by St. *Jude*, ver. 14, 15. declares this to be the occasion of the Lord's coming with Thousands of his Saints, *viz. to execute Judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly Deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard Speeches which ungodly Sinners have spoken against him*; all which are Matters of Fact against the eternal Rules of Morality. And our Saviour himself, in that popular *Scheme* and Description he gives of the Proceedings of the *Day of Judgment*, plainly declares, that one of the principal Matters he will then inquire into, will be our *Neglect* or *Observance* of that great moral Duty of *Charity* towards the Poor and Needy, *Mat.* 25. 32—46. Which is a plain Evidence, that our *obeying* or *disobeying* the eternal Laws of Morality, is that by which we do most *please* or *displease* God; since 'tis upon this, that he will most insist in his final *Arbitration* of our eternal Fate. For since his last Judgment is only the *final Execution* of his Laws, we may be sure, that whatsoever it is that he will *principally* insist on in his *Judgment*, that is the *principal* Matter of his *Laws*. And now having sufficiently proved the *Truth* of the Proposition, I proceed to the *Reasons* of it; upon what *Accounts* it is, that God hath made moral Goodness the main and principal Part of our Religion. The chief Reasons of which, are these four.

First, Because 'tis by moral Goodness that we do most *honour* him.

Secondly, Because 'tis by this that we do most *imitate* him.

Thirdly, Because 'tis by this that we advance to *our own* Happiness.

Fourthly, When all our *positive* Duty is ceas'd, *this* is to be the *eternal* Work and Business of our Nature.

I. God hath made moral Goodness the *principal* Part of our Religion, because 'tis by this that we do him the greatest *Honour*. It is an excellent saying of *Hierocles*, τιμὴν ποιεῖται τοῦ ἀνενδεοῦς τὴν τῶν ὑπ' ἐκείνου προτεινομένων ἀγαθῶν ὑποδοχήν· οὐ γὰρ τιμήσεις τὸν Θεὸν διδοὺς τι αὐτῷ, ἀλλ' ἄξιος τοῦ λαβεῖν τὰ παρ' ἐκείνου γενόμενος, i. e. *The best Honour we can do to a self-sufficient Being, is to receive the good Things he holds forth unto us; and therefore 'tis not by giving to God that you honour him, but by rendring your selves worthy to receive of him; for* saith he, ὅστις τιμᾷ τὸν Θεὸν ὡς προσδεόμενον, οὗτος λέληθεν οἰόμενος ἑαυτὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ εἶναι κρείττονα, i. e. *Whosoever gives honour to God as to one that wants, doth not consider that he thereby sets himself above God.* For by his own *Self-sufficiency*, he is infinitely removed above all Capacity of *Want*, and so can never need any additional *Contributions* of Glory and Happiness from his Creatures. For *Glory* being nothing else but the *Resplendency* of Perfection, which always *reflects* its own Beams upon it self, where-ever there is *infinite* Perfection (as to be sure there is in the Nature of God) there must an *infinite* Glory proceed from it; and therefore being infinitely glorious in *himself*, it is impossible that any Thing we do should add any *farther* Glory to him. So that if we would truly *honour* and *glorify* him, it must not be by *giving* to, but by *receiving* from him. Now the best Thing we can receive from God, is *Himself*; and Himself we *do* receive in our strict *compliance* with the eternal Laws of Goodness. Which *Laws* being *transcribed* from the *Nature* of God, from his own *eternal* Righteousness and Goodness, we do by *obeying* them, derive *God*'s Nature into *ours*. So that while we write after the *Copy* of his Laws, we write out the *Perfections* of his *Being*; and his Laws being the *Seal* upon which he hath *engraven* his Nature, we do in obeying them, take *Impression* from him, and *stamp* his blessed Nature on our own. For all those virtuous Dispositions of Mind which we acquire by the Practice of Virtue, are so many genuine *Signatures* of *God*, taken from the *Seal* of his *Law*, and *Participations* of his *Nature*. For so Holiness, which con-

sist

ſiſts in a *Conformity* of Soul with the eternal Laws of Goodneſs, is in Scripture called the *Signature* or *Impreſſion of the Spirit of God, whereby we are ſealed unto the Day of Redemption,* Epheſ. 4. 30. and ſuch as *do Righteouſneſs,* are ſaid to *be born of God,* 1 *John* 2. 29. which implies, their *deriving* from him who is their *Divine* Parent, a *Divine* and *God-like* Nature, even as Children do their *Human* Nature from their *human* Parents. So that by the Practice of moral Goodneſs, we receive from God the *beſt* Thing he can beſtow, *viz. a Divine* and *God-like* Nature; and conſequently by ſo doing, we render him the *higheſt* Honour and Glory. For ſince we can no *otherwiſe* honour him but by *receiving* from him, we doubtleſs do him the *greateſt* honour when we receive *Himſelf*, by *partaking* of the Perfections of *his* Nature, which are the greateſt Gift he can communicate to us. *Herein,* ſaith our Saviour, *is my Father glorified that ye bear much Fruit,* John 15. 8. Μόνος γὰρ οἶδε τιμᾶν ὁ προηγουμένως ἱερεῖον ἑαυτὸν προσάγων, ſaith the aforenamed Philoſopher, *i. e.* he only knows how to honour God, who preſents *himſelf a Sacrifice* to him, *carves* his own Soul into a Divine *Image,* and *compoſes* his Mind into a *Temple* for the Entertainment of God, and the Reception of the divine Light and Glory. 'Tis then therefore that we beſt *honour* God, when by the Practice of true Godlineſs we *conform* our Wills and Affections to him; and *derive* into ourſelves *his* Nature and Perfections; and ſhould you erect to him a Temple more magnificent than *Solomon*'s, and load its Altars with *Hecatombs* of Sacrifices, and make it perpetually ring with *Pſalms* and reſounding *Choirs* of *Hallelujahs,* it would not be comparably ſo *great* an Honour to him, as to convert your own Souls into *living* Temples, and make them the *Habitations* of his Glory and Perfections. For he *values* no Sacrifices like that of an *obedient* Will, *delights* in no Choir like that of *pure* and *heavenly* Affections, nor hath he in all his Creation an Enſign of Honour ſo truly *worthy* of him, as that of a *Divine* and *God-like* Soul; a Soul that *reflects* his Image, and *ſhines back* his own Glory upon him. Wherefore, ſince 'tis by the Practice of moral Goodneſs, that we *receive* God, and *copy* his Nature into our own, it is no wonder he ſhould make it the *principal* Part of our Duty. For how can it be otherwiſe expected, but that he ſhould exact that *chiefly* of us, which moſt conduces to his own Glory. Since then, nothing we can do can conduce to his Glory, but only our *receiving* Benefits from him, and ſince no Benefit we receive from him, can ſo *much* conduce to it as our receiving *Himſelf,* and ſince we can no *otherwiſe* receive himſelf, but by *practiſing* that Goodneſs which is the Perfection of his Nature, we muſt *hereby* doubtleſs render him the greateſt Honour and Glory.

II. God hath made moral Goodneſs the *principal* Part of our Duty, becauſe 'tis by this that we do moſt truly *imitate* him. For ſo you find in Scripture, that where-ever God is propoſed to us for a *Pattern* of Action, it is by ſome Act or other of *Morality,* that we are required to *tranſcribe* and *imitate* him. So 1 *Pet.* 1. 16. *Be ye holy, for I am holy*; and *Luke* 6. 36. *Be ye merciful as your Father in Heaven is merciful*; *and* Mat. 5. 48. *Be you perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect.* And indeed, tis *only* in moral Goodneſs that God *can* be the Pattern of our Imitation; as for thoſe Perfections of his, which for Diſtinction ſake we call *Natural, viz.* his *Omniſcience* and *Omnipreſence, Omnipotence* and *Eternity,* they are all beyond the *Sphere* of our Imitation, and therefore were never propoſed to us as the *Copies* of our Actions. But as for his moral Perfections, *viz.* his *Goodneſs,* and *Righteouſneſs,* and *Purity,* and *Mercy,* they are the Fundamental *Rules* and *Standards* of all Moral Action. For the Nature of God, as it is infinitely *good* and *righteous,* is the eternal *Fountain* whence all the Laws of Morality are derived; and all thoſe moral Precepts by which he governs his rational *Creation,* are only ſo many *Exemplifications* of the moral Perfections of his own Nature. For the *Holineſs* of God, which comprehends all his moral Perfections, conſiſts in that *eſſential Rectitude* of Nature, whereby he always *chooſes* and *acts* conformably to the Dictates of his own *infallible Reaſon*; and 'tis to this Rectitude of *chooſing* and *acting,* that all his moral Laws do *oblige* us. For moral Laws are only the *Dictates* of *right*

Reaſon,

Reaſon, preſcribing us what to *do*, and what to *avoid*; ſo that in our Compliance with them, we follow the Rule of God's *own* Will and Actions, and thereby *imitate* the eternal Rectitude of *his* Nature. For tho in thoſe different *States* and *Relations* of God and Creature, *right Reaſon* cannot be ſuppoſed to oblige *him* and *us* to all the ſame *particular* Choices and Actions, yet it obliges us both to act *reaſonably* in our reſpective States and Relations; it obliges *God* to act *reaſonably* and as it becomes the State and Relation of a *God* and *Creator*: And it obliges *us* to act *reaſonably* and as it becomes the State and Relation of *Men* and *Creatures*. And as for *God*, *He* is *invariably* inclined to do all that *right Reaſon* obliges him to, by the *eſſential Rectitude* of his own Nature; and herein conſiſts all his *moral Perfection*, which is nothing elſe but the *immutable* Inclination of his Nature, to do whatever is *juſt*, and *good*, and *reaſonable*. So that while we live according to the *Dictates* of *Reaſon*, or, which is the ſame Thing, the *eternal Laws* of Morality, we *trace* and *imitate* the moral Perfections of God; and in *our* Place and Station, live at the ſame Rate, and by the ſame Rule, that *He* doth in *his*. We do what God himſelf *would* do, if he were in *our* Place, and what the Son of God *did* do when he was in our Nature; and there is no other Difference between *his* Life and *ours*, but what neceſſarily ariſes out of our different States and Relations. Since therefore moral Goodneſs is an *Imitation* of God, 'tis no wonder that he ſo much prefers it before all other matter of Duty. For he muſt needs be ſuppoſed to love *that* above all Things, which is the true *Copy* and *Image* of thoſe Perfections of his Nature, for the ſake of which he loves *Himſelf* above all. For he loves himſelf not merely becauſe he is *Himſelf*, but becauſe he is in all reſpects *morally Good*, and his *Will* and *Power* are perfectly compliant with the *infallible* Dictates of his own *Reaſon*; and hence ariſes his infinite *Complacency* in himſelf, that there is nothing in him but what his own Reaſon perfectly *approves*, no *Inclination* in his Will or Nature but what is exactly agreeable to the faireſt *Ideas* of his own Mind. And ſince it is for his own *Goodneſs-ſake* that he loves himſelf as he doth, we may be ſure that there is nothing *without* him can be ſo dear to him, as *that* in us which is the *Image* of his Goodneſs. Every like, we ſay, loves its like, and *the righteous Lord*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *loveth Righteouſneſs*, Pſalm 11. 7. *i. e.* being righteous *himſelf* he loves Righteouſneſs in *others* by an invincible *Sympathy* of Nature. His *greateſt* Heaven and Delight is in his own moſt righteous Nature, and *next to that*, in righteous Souls that *imitate* and *reſemble* him. Ψυχῆς καθαρᾶς τόπον οἰκειότερον ἐπὶ γῆς Θεὸς οὐκ ἔχει. *God hath not a more grateful Habitation upon Earth than in a pure and virtuous Mind*; εὐσεβέσιν δὲ βροτοῖς γάνυμαι τόσσον, ὅσον ὀλύμπῳ, ſaith *Apollo*, that Mimic of God, by his *Pythian* Oracle, *i. e. I rejoice as much in pious Souls as in my own Heaven.* Which is much what the ſame with that gracious Declaration that God himſelf makes by the Prophet, *Iſaiah* 57. 15. *Thus ſaith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth Eternity, whoſe name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy Place; with him alſo that is of a contrite and humble Spirit, to revive the Spirit of the Humble, and to revive the Heart of the contrite ones.* Since therefore moral Duties are all but ſo many *Copies* and *Exemplifications* of God's Nature, this is a ſufficient Reaſon why he ſhould prefer them *before* all the *Poſitives* of Religion.

III. God *Principally* requires Moral Goodneſs, becauſe 'tis by the Practice of this that we advance to *our own* natural Happineſs. For the *natural* Happineſs of *reaſonable* Creatures, conſiſts in being intirely *governed* by right Reaſon, *i. e.* in having our *Minds* perfectly *informed* what it is that right Reaſon *requires* of us, and our *Wills* and *Affections* reduced to an entire *Conformity* thereunto. And this is the *Perfection* of Moral Goodneſs, which conſiſts in behaving our ſelves towards *God* and *our ſelves*, and all the *World* as right Reaſon *adviſes*, or as it *becomes* rational Creatures placed in our Circumſtances and Relations. And when, by practiſing all *that* true *Piety* and *Virtue* which Moral Goodneſs implies, we are perfectly *accompliſhed* in our Behaviour towards God, our ſelves, and all the World, ſo as to render to each, without

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any *Reserve* or *Reluctancy*, what is *fit* and *due* in the Judgment of *right* Reason, we are arriv'd to the most *happy* State that a reasonable Nature can aspire to. 'Tis true, in *this* Life we cannot be *perfectly* happy; and that not only because we live in *wretched* Bodies that are continually liable to *Pain* and *Sickness*, but also because we are imperfect *our selves*, and have none to converse with but *imperfect* Creatures. But were we once stript of these *Natural* and *Moral* Imperfections, wheresoever we lived we should *necessarily* be happy. Were I to live *all alone*, without this *painful* Body, I should necessarily be in a great measure *happy* while I followed right Reason, tho I lived in the *darkest* Nook of the Creation. For there I should still *contemplate* God, and while I did so, my Mind would be always *Ravish'd* with his Beauty and Perfections; there I should most *ardently* love him, and while I did so, I should *Sympathize* and *Share* with him in his Happiness; there I should still *Adore* and *Praise* him, and while I did so, I should feel my self continually *drawn up* to him, and *wrapt* into a real Enjoyment of him; *there* I should be imitating his Perfections, and while I did so, I should enjoy an *unspeakable Self-satisfaction*, perceiving how every moment I grew a more *Divine* and *God-like* Creature; *there* I should intirely resign up my self to his Heavenly *Will* and *Disposal*, and while I did so, I should be perpetually *exulting* under a joyous Assurance of his *Love* and *Favour*; in a Word, *there* I should firmly *depend* upon his *Truth* and *Goodness*, and while I did so, I should be always *Triumphing* in a *sure* and *certain* Hope of a happy Being for ever. Thus were I shut up all *alone* in an *unbodied* State, and had none but *God* to converse with, by behaving my self towards *him* as *right Reason* directs me, I should always enjoy him, and in that Enjoyment should be always Happy. And if, while I thus behaved my self towards *God*, I took care at the same time to demean my self towards my self with that exact *Prudence* and *Temperance* and *Fortitude* and *Humility*, which right Reason requires, I should hereby create another *Heaven* within me; a Heaven of *calm* Thoughts, *quiet* and *uniform* Desires, *serene* and *placid* Affections, which would be so many *ever-flowing* Springs of *Pleasure*, *Tranquillity* and *Contentment* within me. But if, while I thus enjoyed *God* and my self, by behaving my self as right Reason directs, I might be admitted to live and converse among perfect Spirits, and to demean my self towards them with that exact *Charity* and *Justice* and *Peaceableness* and *Modesty*, which right Reason requires, the Wit of Man could not conceive a true Pleasure *beyond* what I should *now* enjoy. For now I should be possest of every Thing my utmost *Wishes* could propose; of a *good* God, a *God-like*, joyful and contented Soul, a peaceable, kind and righteous Neighbourhood; and so all *above*, *within* and *without* me, would be a *pure* and *perfect* Heaven. And indeed, when I have *thrown off* this Body, and am *stripp'd* into a naked Ghost, the only, or at least the greatest Goods my Nature will be capable of enjoying, are *God*, *my self*, and *blessed Spirits*; and these are no otherwise *enjoyable*, but only by Acts of Piety and Virtue, without which there is no good Thing beyond the Grave, that a Soul can taste or relish. So that if, when I go to seek my Fortune in the *World of Spirits*, God should thus bespeak me, " O Man, now thou art leaving all these Enjoyments of " *Sense*, consult with thy self what will do thee *Good*, and thou shalt have " whatsoever thou wilt ask, to carry with thee into that *Spiritual* State;" I am sure the utmost I should crave would be this, " Lord give me a Heart *in-*" *flamed* with Love, and *winged* with Duty to thee, that thereby I may but " enjoy *thee*; give me a *sober* and a *temperate* Mind, that thereby I may but " enjoy *my self*; give me a *kind*, a *peaceable*, and a *righteous* Temper, that thereby " I may but enjoy the sweet Society of *blessed* Spirits; O give me but these blessed " Things, and thou hast *Crowned* all my Wishes, and to Eternity I will never " crave any other Favour for my self but only this, that I may *continue* a " pious and virtuous Soul for ever; for while I continue so, I am sure I shall " enjoy all Spiritual Good, and be as happy as *Heaven* can make me." So

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that the main Happineſs you ſee of Human Nature conſiſts in the *Perfection* of Moral Goodneſs; and it being ſo, it is no wonder that the good God, who above all Things *deſires* the Happineſs of his Creatures, ſhould above all Things *exact* of us the Duties of Morality. He knows that our *Supreme* Beatitude is founded in our *Piety* and *Virtue*, and that out of our free, and conſtant, ſpritely and vivacious Exerciſe of *theſe*, ariſes all our Heaven both *here* and *hereafter*; and knowing this, that *tender* Love which he bears us, that *mighty* Concern which he hath for our Welfare, makes him thus *urgent* and *importunate* with us. For he regards our *Duty* no farther than it tends to our *Good*, and values each Act of our *Obedience* by what it contributes to our *Happineſs*; and 'tis therefore that he prefers *Moral* Duties above *poſitive*, becauſe they are more *eſſential* to our eternal Welfare.

IV. And laſtly, God *Principally* requires of us Moral Goodneſs, becauſe when all *poſitive* Duty is ceas'd, *this* is to be the eternal Work and Exerciſe of our Natures. For, Moral Good is *from everlaſting to everlaſting*, its Birth was elder than the World, and its Life and Duration runs parallel with Eternity; before ever *the Mountains were brought forth*, 'twas founded in the Nature of God, and as an inſeparable *Beam* of his all-comprehending Reaſon, it *ſhines* from one end of the *World* to the other. For as ſoon as ever there was a rational Creature *in Being*, the Obligations of Morality laid hold on him, before ever any *Poſitive* Duty was *impoſed*; and as long as ever there *remains* a rational Creature, the Obligations of Morality will *abide* on him, when all Poſitive Duty is *expired*. For Moral Obligations are not founded like Poſitive ones upon *mutable* Circumſtances, but upon *firm* and *everlaſting* Reaſons; upon Reaſons that to all *Eternity* will carry with them the ſame Force and Neceſſity. For as long as we are the Creatures of an *infinitely perfect* Creator, 'twill be as much our Duty as 'tis now, to *love* and *adore* him; as long as we are *reaſonable* Creatures, 'twill be as much our Duty as 'tis now, to ſubmit our *Will* and *Affections* to our *Reaſon*; and as long as we are related to other *reaſonable* Creatures, 'twill be as much our Duty as 'tis now, to be *Kind*, and *Juſt*, and *Peaceable*, in all our Intercourſes with them. So that theſe are ſuch Duties as no Will can *diſpenſe* with, no Reaſons *abrogate*, no Circumſtances *diſannul*, or *make void*; but as long as God is what he *is*, and we are what we *are*, they *muſt* and *will* oblige us. So that what the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith of God, may be truly applied to Moral Goodneſs, *the Heavens ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt remain, they all ſhall wax old as doth a Garment, and be folded up and changed; but thou art the ſame Yeſterday, to Day, and for Ever, and thy Years ſhall have no end.* But as long ſince, the *Poſitive* Parts of the *Jewiſh* Religion were *Cancell'd* and *Repealed*, the Veil of the Temple *rent in twain*, the Temple it-ſelf *buried* in Ruins, and all its Altars *thrown down*, and their Sacrifices *aboliſhed*, whilſt the Moral Parts of that Religion ſtill ſtand *firm* as the everlaſting Mountains about *Jeruſalem*; ſo the Time will come when the *Poſitive* Parts of *Chriſtianity* it-ſelf muſt *ceaſe*, when Faith muſt be *ſwallowed up* in Viſion, and Sacraments be *made void* by Perfection, and all the ſtated Times and outward Solemnities of our Worſhip *expire* into an everlaſting Sabbath; but then when all this *Scene* of Things is quite *vaniſhed* away, Piety and Virtue will ſtill keep the *Stage*, and be the everlaſting *Exerciſe* of our glorified Natures. For as I ſhewed before, all *Poſitive* Duty is inſtituted in ſubſerviency to *Moral*, and like a Scaffold to a Houſe, is only erected for the *Convenience* of Building up this everlaſting Structure of Morality; and when this is once *finiſhed*, muſt be all taken down again as an unneceſſary *Incumbrance*, that now only *hides* and *obſcures* the Beauty of that Heavenly Building that was raiſed *on* it, and ſhall abide *without* it for ever, to entertain our Faculties thro' all the future Ages of our Being, and to be the everlaſting Manſion of our Natures. Wherefore, ſince *Poſitive* Duties muſt all *ceaſe* and *expire*, and only *Moral* Goodneſs is to be our Buſineſs for *ever*, 'tis no wonder that God, who is ſo good a *Maſter*, takes ſo much care in this ſhort *Apprenticeſhip* of our Life, to train us up in that which is to be our *Trade* for ever. He knows it is upon Piety and Virtue that we muſt

live to Eternity, and maintain our ſelves in all our Glory and Happineſs; and that, if when we come into the inviſible World we have not this bleſſed Trade to *ſubſiſt by*, we are *undone* for ever; and therefore, out of a tender regard to our Welfare, he makes it his *Principal* Care to *train* us up in this everlaſting *Buſineſs* of our Natures.

What then remains, but that *above* all things we take care to apply our ſelves to the Practice of Moral Goodneſs; to contemplate, and love, and adore, and imitate God; to depend upon him, and reſign up our ſelves to his Diſpoſal and Government; to be ſober and temperate in our Affections and Appetites, and juſt, and charitable, and modeſt, and peaceable towards one another. Theſe are the *Great* Things which God requires at our Hands, and without *theſe* all our Religion is a fulſome Cheat. 'Tis true, the *Poſitive* Parts of Religion are our Duty as well as theſe, and God by his Sovereign Authority *exacts* them at our Hands; and unleſs when Jeſus Chriſt hath been ſufficiently propoſed to us, we do ſincerely *believe* in him; unleſs we ſtrike Covenant with him by *Baptiſm*, and frequently renew that Covenant in the *Lord's Supper*; unleſs we diligently attend on the *Publick Aſſemblies* of his Worſhip, and uſe an honeſt Care to avoid *Schiſm*, and to perſiſt in *Unity* with his true Catholick Church, there is no pretence of Morality will bear us out when we appear before his dread Tribunal. But then we are to conſider, that the proper Uſe of all theſe *Poſitive* Duties is to *improve* and *perfect* us in *Moral* Goodneſs; and unleſs we uſe them to *this* Effect, we ſhall render them altogether *void* and *inſignificant*. Wherefore, as we would not loſe all the *Fruits* of our Poſitive Duties, let us take care to attend them to their utmoſt *Deſign*, to improve our *Sacrifice* to *Obedience*, our *Sacraments* to *Gratitude* and *Love*, our *Hearing* to *Practice*, our *Praying* to *Devotion*, and our *Faſting* to *Humility* and *Repentance*. For if we reſt in *theſe* Duties and go no farther, thinking by ſuch ſhort Payments to *compound* with God for all thoſe Debts we owe to the eternal Laws of Morality, we miſerably *cheat* and *beſool* our own Souls, which notwithſtanding all this Exactneſs about the *Poſitives* of Religion, are by their own *Immoral* Affections ſtill enſlaved to the Devil; to whom it is much one what our outward *Form* of Religion is, whether it be *Chriſtian*, or *Heathen*, or *Mahometan*, provided it doth not *operate* on our Minds, or give any *Check* to the Current of our depraved Natures. For whether we bow to *God* or to an *Idol*, is all one to the Devil, ſo long as our Souls remain *Profane* and *Indevout*; whether we communicate in the Holy *Sacrament* of Chriſt's Death, or in the impure Rites of *Venus* and *Priapus*, is indifferent to him, ſo long as our Hearts continue *Putrid* and *Corrupt*, ſteaming with *unchaſte* Deſires and Affections; whether we celebrate the Chriſtian *Feſtivals*, or the bloody *Saturnals*, or barbarous *Bacchanalia*, is no great matter to him, provided our *Minds* be but canker'd with *Wrath* and *Malice*, and *Cruelty* and *Revenge*. Theſe are the *Sinews* of his *Government*, and the *Bands* of our Allegiance to his Throne; and whilſt *they* are preſerved, he knows his Kingdom is *ſafe*, and ſo long he doth not much regard what our *outward* Religion is. Nay, there is nothing can be a higher Gratification to his Ambition, than to behold *Himſelf* ſerved in *Chriſt*'s own *Livery*, and worſhipp'd in a *Form of Godlineſs*; by which he hath the Pleaſure of *dividing* Empires with God, and *raviſhing* the better ſhare from him, of beholding his hated Creator *mock'd* with the Shell and Outſide of a Worſhipper, whilſt himſelf is *treated* with the Kernel and Inſide. For whilſt we continue *wicked* under an outward *Form* of Religion, we do in effect ſacrifice our *Beaſt* to God, and *our ſelves* to the Devil; who above all Things loves thoſe unnatural Commixtures of *Hearer* and *Slanderer*, *Worſhipper* and *Deceiver*, *Communicant* and *Drunkard*, *Sacrificer* and *Oppreſſer*; by which we only *exalt* and *ſublimate* Impiety, which never looks ſo Glorious as when 'tis *gilded* with Faſts and long Prayers. Wherefore, as you will anſwer it at your eternal Peril, do not *cheat* and *abuſe* your ſelves with the *Name* and *Shadow* of Religion; leſt when you have *ſuperſtructed* your Hopes

Hopes of Happineſs on a *rotten* Foundation, it ſhould finally *miſcarry* and *ſink* underneath you into everlaſting Wretchedneſs and Deſpair.

CHAP. II.

Concerning Religion; what it is, and what Things are Neceſſary for the founding *and* ſecuring *its Obligations.*

HAVING in the foregoing Chapter briefly diſcourſed concerning the *Nature* of moral Goodneſs, and ſhewn that it is the *principal* Part of Religion, it will be requiſite in the next Place to *explain* what Religion is; that ſo from thence we may collect what Things are neceſſary to the *founding* and *ſecuring* its Obligations, which will be the Subject of the enſuing Chapters.

Religion in the general, reſpects *God* as the *Object* and *Centre* of all its Acts and Offices. For upon Suppoſition, that there is ſuch a Being as *God*, and that there are ſuch Beings as *reaſonable Creatures*, or *capable Subjects* of Religion, it will neceſſarily follow, that there muſt be ſome *Religion* or other to tie and oblige *theſe* Creatures to *that* God. For by God, we mean a Being that hath all *poſſible Perfection* in him, and is the ſupreme *Cauſe* and *Fountain* of all other Being and Perfection; and ſuch a Being we muſt needs acknowledge doth not only *deſerve* the worthieſt Acts of Religion, that *reaſonable* Creatures, who alone are capable of underſtanding his *Worth*, can render to him, but hath alſo an unalienable Right to *exact* and *require* them; and that not only upon the Account of his own eſſential *Deſert* (for whatever he *deſerves*, he hath a Right to *demand*) but alſo upon Account of the *Right* he hath to reaſonable Creatures, who owe their *Beings* to him and all their *Capacities* of ſerving him, and ſo cannot diſpoſe of themſelves without manifeſt Injury to him *contrary* to his Will and Orders. By *reaſonable Creatures*, we mean Beings that are *derived* from God, and are *endowed* by him with a Capacity of underſtanding *him* and *themſelves*; and ſuch Creatures muſt neceſſarily ſtand *obliged* to render him ſuch Acts as are *ſuitable* to, and *due* Acknowledgments of, the *Perfections* of his Nature and their own *Dependence* upon him; and this *Obligation* is that which we call *Religion.* Which word according to *Lactantius, lib.* 4. *Divin. Inſtitut. c.* 28. is derived *à religando,* from *binding* or *obliging* us to God. So that *true Religion in the general is the Obligation of reaſonable Creatures, to render ſuch Acts of Worſhip to God as are ſuitable to the Excellency of his Nature and their Dependence upon him.* Which Definition includes both the *Doctrines* and *Duties* of Religion. For the Doctrines are the *Reaſons* by which it obliges us to the Duties: And as there is no Duty in *Religion* but what derives its *Tie* and *Obligation* from ſome Doctrine *contained* in it; ſo there is no Doctrine in Religion but what *ties* and *obliges* us to ſome Duty that is *injoyned* in it. When therefore I call Religion an *Obligation,* I include in that Term all thoſe *Doctrines* of it concerning *God,* his *Nature,* and his *Tranſactions* with his Creatures, which are the *Reaſons* by which we ſtand obliged to render all Acts of Worſhip to him. But for the better underſtanding the Nature of true Religion, it is neceſſary we ſhould diſtinguiſh it into *natural* and *revealed.* By *natural* Religion, I mean *the Obligation which natural Reaſon lays upon us to render to God all that Worſhip and Obedience, which, upon the Conſideration of his Nature and our Dependence upon him, it diſcovers to be due to him.* For God having planted in us a *rational* Faculty, by the due *Exerciſe* of which we are naturally led into the Belief of his *Being,* the Senſe of his *Perfections,* and the Acknowledgment of his *Providence,* he expects we ſhould follow it as the *Guide* and *Directory* of our Lives and Actions; and whatſoever this Faculty doth *naturally* and in its *due* Exerciſe dictate to us, is as much the *Voice of God* as any *Revelation.*

For

For whatever it *naturally* dictates, it must dictate by *his* Direction who is the *Author* of its *Nature*, and who having framed it to speak *such* a Sense, and pronounce *such* a Judgment of Things, hath thereby put his *Word* into its Mouth, and doth *himself* speak thro' it, as thro' a standing *Oracle* which he hath erected in our Breasts, on purpose to *convey* and *deliver* his own Mind and Will to us. So that whatsoever natural *Reason*, rightly exercised, teaches us concerning *God* and our Duty towards him, that is true *Religion*, and doth as effectually *bind* and *oblige* us to him, as if it had been immediately *revealed* by him. It teaches us that God is infinitely *wise* and *just* and *powerful* and *good*; that he is the *Fountain* of our Beings, the *Disposer* of our Affairs, and the *Arbitrator* of our Fate, both here and hereafter; and by these Doctrines it obliges us to *admire* and *adore* him, to *fear* and *love* him, to *trust* and *obey* him. And this is *natural Religion*, which consists of such *Doctrines* as *natural Reason* teaches us concerning God and his *Nature* and *Providence*, and of such Duties as it *infers* from those Doctrines, and *enforces* by them; and all the Doctrines of this Religion upon which it founds its Duties, being *eternal Verities*, as they must necessarily be, being all deduced from the *immutable* Natures of God and Things, all the Duties of it must be *morally*, that is *eternally*, good and reasonable, because those Doctrines are the *eternal* Reasons upon which they are *founded*, and by which they *oblige*. So that whatsoever is a Duty of *natural* Religion must oblige *for ever*, because it obliges by an *eternal* Reason, and so can never be *dispensed* with, or *abrogated* till the Natures of Things are *cancell'd* and *reversed*, and eternal *Truths* are converted into *Lyes*.

In short therefore, *natural* Religion hath only *natural* Reason for its *Rule* and *Measure*, which from the Nature of God and Things deduces all those *eternal* Reasons by which it *distinguishes* our Actions into *honest* and *dishonest*, *decorous* and *filthy*, *good* and *evil*, *necessary* and *sinful*. For it doth not make them good or evil by judging them so; but if it judgeth *truly*, it judgeth of them as it *finds* them; and unless it finds them good or evil *in themselves* upon some *eternal* Reason, *for* or *against* them, its Judgment is *false* and *erroneous*. So that the *objective* Goodness or Evil that is in the Actions themselves is the Measure of our *natural Reason*, but our natural *Reason* judging *truly* concerning them is the Measure of our *Choice* or *Refusal* of them; for be our *Action* never so good or evil in *itself*, unless we have some *eternal* Reason *for* or *against* it, we cannot *judge* it so; and unless we judge it so, we cannot reasonably *choose* or *refuse* it; but as soon as ever we have *judged* and *pronounced* it good or evil upon an *eternal* Reason, we stand obliged by that Judgment to do or forbear it. So that right Reason, pronouncing such Actions Good and such Evil, is the *Law* of Nature; and those eternal Reasons, upon which it so pronounces them, are the *Creed* of Nature, both which together make *natural Religion*. And by *this Religion* was the *World* governed, at least the greatest Part of it, for some Thousands of Years; till by *long* and *sad* Experience it was found too weak to *correct* the Errors of Mens *Minds*, and *restrain* the wild Extravagancies of their *Wills* and *Affections*; and then God out of his great Pity to *lost* and *degenerate* Mankind, vouchsafed to us the glorious Light of *revealed* Religion, which in the *largest* Acceptation of it includes all *natural* Religion, as well the *credenda* as *agenda*, the Doctrines as the Duties of it; both which are contained in that *Revelation* of his Will which God hath made to the World, to which it hath superadded sundry Doctrines and Duties of *supernatural* Religion.

But *strictly* speaking, revealed Religion, as it is distinguished from *natural*, consists of such *Doctrines* and *Duties* as are knowable and discoverable *only* by *Revelation*; as are not to be *deduced* and *inferred* by *Reasoning* and *Discourse* from any necessary or natural *Principles*, but wholly depend upon the *Counsel* and *Good-will* of God. And where Things depend intirely upon God's *Will*, and their Being or not Being lies wholly in his *free Disposal*, it is impossible that our natural Reason should ever arrive at the *Knowledge* of them without some *Revelation* of his *Will* concerning them. For in such Matters as these, where

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the *Will* of God is abſolutely *free*, Reaſon without Revelation hath neither *neceſſary* nor *probable* Cauſes and Principles to argue from, and therefore can make neither *certain* Concluſions nor ſo much as *probable* Gueſſes concerning them, but muſt neceſſarily remain altogether in the *dark* till ſuch Time as God hath *revealed* to it which way his Will is *determined*; and of ſuch Matters as theſe, conſiſts *all* revealed Religion *ſtrictly* ſo called. For tho God hath made *ſundry* Revelations of his Will, yet the *ſubject Matter* of them was for the *Main* always the *ſame*, *viz.* the Doctrine of the *Mediation* of Jeſus Chriſt, and the Duties that are ſubſequent thereunto, which from that Promiſe which God made to *Adam* upon his Fall, *the Seed of the Woman ſhall break the Serpent's head*, to the laſt Promulgation of the *Goſpel*, hath been the great *Theme* of all divine Revelation. For what elſe was that Revelation which God made to *Abraham*, *in thy Seed ſhall all the Nations of the Earth be bleſſed*, but only the *Dawning* of the Goſpel? which is nothing but *glad Tidings* of the *Mediator*. What was the *Law* of *Moſes*, but only the ſame *Goſpel ſhining* thro' a *Cloud* of Types and *ſymbolical* Repreſentations; and what are all the ſucceeding *Prophecies* of the *old Teſtament*, but only the ſame Goſpel ſtill ſhining *clearer* and *clearer*, till at laſt it broke forth in its *meridian Brightneſs*? And were this a proper Place, I think I could eaſily demonſtrate that from *Adam* to *Moſes*, from *Moſes* to the *Prophets*, from the *Prophets* to *Jeſus Chriſt*, the main *Scope* and *Deſign* of all divine Revelation, hath been the gradual *Diſcovery* of this great Myſtery of the *Mediation*. So that revealed Religion was for the *Matter* of it always the *ſame*, tho it was not always revealed with the ſame *Perſpicuity*, but *clear'd up*, by degrees, from an obſcure *Twilight* to a perfect *Day*. Wherefore *Chriſtianity*, which in ſtrictneſs is nothing but the *Doctrine of the Mediation*, together with its appendent *Duties*, ought not to be look'd on as a *new* Religion of 1600 Years date; for in reality, 'tis as *antient* as the *Fall*, and was *then* preached to *Adam* in that *dark* and *myſterious* Promiſe; after which, it was a little *more* clearly repeated, tho very obſcurely *ſtill*, in God's Covenant with *Abraham*; and again, after that, it was much more *amply* revealed in the *Types* and *Figures* of the Law of *Moſes*, which yet, like painted Glaſs in a Window, did under their pompous Shew, ſtill *darken* and *obſcure* the holy Myſteries within them, which were nothing but the Doctrines and Laws of the Chriſtian Religion. So that *Judaiſm* was only Chriſtianity *veil'd*, and Chriſtianity is only Judaiſm *revealed*.

Thus the *Religion* of the *Mediator*, you ſee, was the principal *Subject* of all divine *Revelation*; and this, *without* Revelation, natural Reaſon could never have *diſcovered*, becauſe the whole of it depended upon the *Free-will* of God. For whether he would admit of *any* Mediator or no; whether he would admit his *own Son* to be our Mediator or no; whether he would depoſit ſuch ineſtimable Bleſſings for us or no, in the Hands of our Mediator, was intirely left to his *free* Determination; and there was no *neceſſary* Cauſe either *within* or *without* him, no nor any *probable* one neither, that human Reaſon could ever have *diſcovered*, that could *incline* or *determine* him one way or t'other. So that till ſuch Time as he *revealed* his Will to us, we were left utterly in the *dark* as to this Matter, and had no Manner of Principles to *argue* from, or ſo much as to *gueſs* by. This therefore is ſtrictly the *Revealed* Religion as it ſtands in oppoſition to the *Natural*. But ſince, together with revealed Religion, God hath put forth a *ſecond Edition* of Natural, which was almoſt *loſt* and grown *out of Print*, thro' the wretched Negligence and Stupidity of Mankind, and ſince he hath not only revealed them *together*, but alſo incorporated them into *one*; Religion, as it is now framed and conſtituted by this happy *Conjunction* of natural with revealed, may be thus defined, *It is the Obligation of rational Creatures, to render ſuch Acts of Worſhip to God thro' Jeſus Chriſt as he himſelf hath inſtituted, and as are in their own Natures ſuitable to his Excellencies, and their Dependence upon him.* Where by *Acts of Worſhip*, I do not mean ſuch only as are *immediately* directed *to* and terminated *upon* God, as all thoſe are which are contained in the firſt Table

Table of the Decalogue; but all those Acts *in general* which God hath *commanded*, which being performed upon a *religious* Account, that is, out of *Homage* and *Obedience* to God's Will and Authority, are as *truly* and *properly* Acts of Worship to him, as *Prayer*, or *Praise* or *Adjuration*.

And now having given this short Account of the Nature of Religion, it will from hence be easy to collect what *Principles* are necessary to the *founding* and *securing* its Obligations: For,

First, God being the great *Object* of all Religion, it must be absolutely necessary in order to our being truly Religious, that we *believe* that God *is*.

Secondly, Religion being an *Obligation* of us to God; that this Obligation may take effect upon us, it is necessary we should believe, that he *concerns* himself about us, and consequently that he *governs* the World by his *Providence*.

Thirdly, Religion obliging us to render all due *Acts of Worship* to him, to *enforce* this Obligation upon us, it is necessary we should believe, that he will certainly *reward* us if we *render* those Acts to him, and as certainly *punish* us if we do *not*.

Fourthly, These Acts of Worship, which Religion obliges us to, being such as are *suitable* to the Excellency of God's Nature, to enable us to *fulfil* this Obligation, it is necessary we should have *right Apprehensions* of the Nature of God.

Fifthly, Religion obliging us to render all these Acts of Worship to God *in* and *thro'* Jesus Christ, to our performing this, it is necessary we should believe in his *Mediation*.

These are the great *Principles* in which all the Obligations of Religion are *founded*; and therefore in order to the thorow *fixing* those *Obligations* upon Mens Minds, it will be necessary, before we proceed to the particular Duties which Religion obliges us to, to discourse of these Principles distinctly.

CHAP. III.

Of the Necessity of believing that God is, *in order to Mens being truly Religious.*

HE *that cometh unto God*, saith the Apostle, *must believe that God is*, Heb. 11. 6. where by *coming to God*, is meant *Worshipping* him, that is, expressing our *Veneration* of, and *Affection* to him, by outward and visible *Signs* and *Actions*; and unless our *outward* Actions in Religion proceed from an *inward* Veneration of, and Affection to him, they are not *Worship* but *Mockery*; but how is it possible a Man should inwardly *venerate* God, when he *believes* there is *no* such Being in the World? For how *real* soever any Thing may be *in itself*, if we *believe* it *is* not, it is to us as if it *were* not; and therefore tho God doth so *necessarily* exist, as that he cannot *but* be, the very Notion of him implying an *infinite* distance from *not being*; yet, while we *believe* he *is* not, our Thoughts can be no more concern'd about him than about purchasing an Inheritance in *Utopia*. So that this Proposition that *God is*, is the *prime Fundamental* of all Religion, and if this be *removed*, Religion must *sink*, and all its sacred Obligations *fly in sunder*. But this is so *self-evident* that it would be very impertinent to *insist* upon the Proof of it. All that I shall do therefore in Pursuance of this Argument, shall be to endeavour to establish the *Belief* of this *fundamental* Truth upon which all Religion depends; and that, First, By inquiring into, and removing the *Causes* of Mens *Infidelity* in this Matter; Secondly, by representing the *Folly* and *Unreasonableness* of it. For as for the *Proofs* and *Evidences* of God's *Being*, I shall reserve them till I come to Discourse of his *Providence*, where, I think, there is enough said to satisfy any Man that is not desperately harden'd against all Conviction.

SECT.

SECT. I.

Of the Causes *of Atheism; shewing the great* Absurdity *and* Unreasonableness *of them.*

CONsidering how loudly the Voice of *Nature*, the Consent of *Nations*, and the beautiful *Structure* and *Contrivance* of Things do proclaim the Being of God, one would think it impossible there should be any such Monster as an *Atheist* among *reasonable* Beings; and indeed it hath been *warmly* disputed among the *Learned*, whether there *be* any such or *no?* A Question, which these latter Ages have determin'd in the *Affirmative*, by an *Induction* of too many woful Instances. But doubtless, had Men impartially attended to the *Dictates* of *Reason*, and not delivered themselves up to the *Infatuation* of their *Lusts*, and the inveterate *Prejudice* of a corrupt *Imagination*, it would have been impossible for so many gross *Absurdities* as Atheism implies, to have entred into their Minds; but when *once* Mens *Wills* and *Affections* have espoused a Proposition, they will make one shift or other, be it never so absurd, to impose it on their *Understandings*; and considering how many *Causes* there are leading Men to Atheism who are *predisposed* thereunto, I cannot think an *Atheist* to be so great a *Wonder*. For so long as Mens *Understandings* are led by their *Wills*, and their *Wills* are *biassed* with Inclinations to Impiety, they can hardly forbear *wishing*, there *were* no God; and then from *wishing* there *were* none, to *believing* there *is* none, will be a very *short* and *easy* Transition. Since therefore their Atheism proceeds not so much from the Defect of their *Reason* as from the Fault of their *Wills*, perhaps the most effectual way to cure it, is rather to *detect* and *remove* those faulty Causes in their *Wills*, than to attempt upon their *Reason*, with the *Proofs* and *Demonstrations* of a Deity. And accordingly you see that when God had once *erected* this goodly *Theatre* of Beings, and *imprinted* on it so many glorious *Characters* of his own *Power*, and *Wisdom*, and *Goodness*, tho from Time to Time he hath wrought *innumerable* Miracles, to reduce Men from *Superstition*, *Idolatry* and *Wickedness*, yet he never wrought *one* to reduce them from *Atheism*. And indeed, to what Purpose *should* he? It being highly improbable that they who will not be convinced of the Being of God by this *standing* Miracle, the *World*, in which there are so many ample *Demonstrations* of his Being, should be convinc'd of it by any other Miracles; for other Miracles are only the *Disorders* and *Interruptions* of Nature; and certainly, the regular *Course* and standing *Order* of Nature, is a much more glorious Evidence of God's *Wisdom* and *Power*, than the most miraculous *Interruptions* and *Disorders* of it. And therefore, if Men will be Atheists, notwithstanding God hath imprinted so many *Proofs* of his Being on this visible Creation, 'tis plain it is not their *Reason* but their *Wills* that make them so; and if so, to what purpose is it to urge their Reason with the *Arguments* of God's Being? Since, if they will not listen to those that are round about them, and are every where to be found in this great *Volume* of Nature, it is highly improbable that even *Miracles* themselves, which are *God's* peculiar *Arguments* (and are therefore called the *Demonstrations of his Spirit*) should ever be able to persuade them. Wherefore, to put a stop to this *Pestilential* Disease, which in these latter Ages, hath been so *fatally* propagated among all Degrees and Orders of Men, I conceive the most proper Way is, to *discover* and *remove* those Faults in their *Wills* which have such a malevolent Influence on their *Understandings*; and the principal ones may be reduced to these nine Heads:

I. A perverse *Opposition* of Will to the Will and Nature of God.

II. Superstitious *Misapprehensions* concerning God.

III. Precipitant *Rashness* in *prescribing* to, and *prejudging* the Divine Providence.

IV. Vain Affectation of *Singularity* in Opinion.

V. Custom of *Drolling on*, and *Ridiculing* the most serious Things.

VI. Taking up our Religion, or Opinions in Religion, without *Examination.*

VII. Measuring the *Truth* or *Falshood* of Religion, by the *Practice* of such as make high *Pretences* to it.

VIII. Placing Religion in the little *Opinions* that constitute the *Sects* and *Parties* we are engaged in.

IX. Profane and careless *Neglect* of *publick Worship.*

I. One great Cause of *Atheism,* is the perverse *Opposition* of Mens Wills to the Will and Nature of God. For the natural Notion which Men have of *God* is, that he is a most *pure* and *holy* Being, infinitely removed by the Perfections of his Nature from all *Inclinations* that are *contrary* to the Dictates of *right Reason.* And accordingly in all those *Declarations,* which he hath made of his Will, they find him expressing an high *Detestation* of all Immorality and Wickedness, and commanding them to abstain from it under the most dreadful *Penalties,* which they know he hath both *Right* and *Power* to inflict when he pleases. Notwithstanding which, presuming on his *Goodness,* and a *future Repentance,* they suffer themselves to be *tempted* and *seduced* into Wickedness; the Pleasure of which, *tolls* them on from one Wickedness to another, till their Wills are *captivated* by custom to inveterate *Habits* of Sinning. So that *now* their *Sense* of God, and of his almighty *Displeasure,* being no longer able to *master* the Stubbornness of their Wills, only serves to *fret* and *disturb* them, to raise *Terrors* and *Anxieties* in their Consciences, and therewithal to *imbitter* the Pleasure of their Sin. For so long as this *Sense* remains alive in their Bosoms, they can never hope to sin *quietly* for it; and it being so, they have no other *Remedy* but either to part with *that* or their *Sins.* For while they *retain* their *Sins,* the Belief of a *God* will grow an intolerable *Vexation* to them, unless by *sophisticating* their Belief with false Notions of Religion they can *temper* it into an *amicable* Compliance with their Lusts. And this is usually the Artifice of the *duller* Sort of People whose Understandings are more *easily* imposed on, *viz.* to intermingle with their Belief of a God such Notions of Religion as may render it *favourable* and *propitious* to their Lusts. And hence I doubt not sprang most of those *wicked* Doctrines which from Time to Time have been *foisted* into Christianity, from the Desire which Men have to *accommodate* the Difference between their Consciences and their wicked Wills, and reconcile their natural *Sense* of *God* to their *Sins.* But alas! these *Artifices* are all so *thin* and *transparent,* that 'tis a hard Matter for Men of Wit to *impose* them on their *Understandings*; and tho' they have an equal *Good-will* to these *wicked Doctrines* with the *duller* Sort of Sinners, yet their *Reason* is too sharp-sighted to be *chous'd* and *deceived* by them. And therefore usually they go another *way* to work, and being sensible that they can never enjoy their *Sins* in *quiet,* while they are awed with the *Sense* and *Belief* of a Deity, and yet obstinately resolved that they *will* enjoy them, they have no other *Expedient,* but to muster up all their *Wit* and *Reason* to dispute the *Belief* of a *God* out of their Minds; and being *stifly* resolved to persist in their *Wickedness,* they are obliged by their own *Interest* to wish there were no God to *observe and punish* them: And then *facile credunt quod volunt,* they easily believe what they would have, and the *slenderest* Probability will sway their Understanding to vote on the Side of their *Interest* and *Affections.* So that when Men are *resolved* to be wicked, Atheism is their *Interest* and *Refuge,* to which they are many Times forced to fly in their own Defence, to avoid the Clamours and Persecutions of their Consciences. Had these Men lived in those good *Pagan Days* wherein they might have *rioted* with Devotion, *Sacrificed* to the Gods in drunken Bowls, and *Worshipp'd* in the *Arms* of a *Strumpet,* no Men would have been more Religious than they; and could they *now* but *compound* the Matter so, as that God should let *them* alone to enjoy their *Lusts,* there is no doubt but *they* would be well enough content to let *him* alone to enjoy his *Being.* But because their Sense of him *frets* and *galls* them, they first grow impatient under it, and then set their Wits at work to raise Objections against it, and either to *laugh*

or *dispute* it out of their Minds. And accordingly *Plato* makes mention of a Sort of Atheists, οἷς ἂν πρὸς τῇ δόξῃ, τῇ Θεῶν ἔρημα εἶναι πάντα, ἀκράτειαί τε ἡδονῶν καὶ λυπῶν προσπέσωσι, μνῆμαι τὰ ἰσχυραὶ καὶ μαθήσεις ὀξεῖαι παρῶσι. *who in Consequence of their Opinion, that all things are void of Gods, have plunged themselves into Intemperance of Pleasures and Pains, being otherwise Persons of great Memories and quick Understandings. De Leg. Lib.* 10. But alas! how unreasonable is it in a Matter of such vast *Importance* for Men to *believe* by their *Interest* and *Affections*! 'Tis true, could Men put out the Sun with *winking*, or extinguish the Nature of Things by an obstinate *Disbelief* of them, it would be very justifiable for those Men to *believe* there is no God, whose *Interest* it is that there *should* be none. But alas! the Natures of Things are *unalterable*, and will be what they *are* whatsoever our *Opinion* is about them. If there *be* a God, there *will* be one, whether we think fit to *believe* it or no; and tho when the Interest of our Lusts requires it, we may possibly *dispute* our selves out of the *Belief* of his Being, yet he is not to be disputed out of his *Being*. We may indeed secure our selves from the *Dread* of his Vengeance, by disputing our selves into a *Disbelief* of him, but we can never *secure* our selves by it from the *Danger* of his Vengeance. And what a senseless Thing is it for a Man to *shut* his Eyes against an unavoidable Danger, merely for Fear of being *frighten'd* by it; and when he might *shun* God's Vengeance by *dreading* it, instead thereof to shun the *Dread* of it? What is this but to set his Reason at work to rock his Conscience asleep, that so he may *destroy* himself without *Fear* or *Disturbance*?

II. Another great Cause of Atheism is superstitious *Misapprehensions* concerning God; which (tho they are lodged in the *Mind*, yet) are most commonly exhaled from the *Affections*, that like *impure* Bogs do generally breathe up all those Meteors that *darken* and *disturb* the Region above. And indeed, most of our ill Apprehensions of God are *transcribed* and *copied* from our own Affections; which, be they never so *irregular*, our own Self-love will be apt to celebrate for *Perfections*. And then, whatsoever we esteem a Perfection in *our selves*, we naturally attribute to *God*, who is the Source and Standard of all Perfection; and those Affections of our own Nature, which we most injuriously attribute to God, we *love* or *hate* in *him* according as we *love* or *hate* them in *other Men*. Thus the *fond* and *indulgent*, who are apt to *doat* upon others without Reason, and to *hug* even their Vices and Deformities, are prone to attribute their own Temper to God, and to look upon him as a Being that is infinitely *indulgent* to those whom *without* any Reason he hath *chosen* for his Favourites. And because he, who is fond of *others*, loves others should be fond of *him*, to be sure he will love his *fond* God too, and be far more devoutly affected towards this *Idol* of his own Temper, than to the *true* God himself clothed in all the native Glory of his own Attributes. But on the contrary, those who are *stern*, and *peevish*, and *implacable*, can by no means endure their own Temper in *others*; and therefore, 'tis no wonder if they hate it in *God*, to whom they are wont injuriously to attribute it. For, how is it possible for them to *affect* a Divinity, whom they have pictured in their own Minds with such a *stern* and *terrible* Aspect, with an *Imperious* Self-will that bears down all Things before it, by *irresistible* Might, without any respect to *Right* or *Wrong*, with *bloody* Hands and a *vengeful* Heart, and a *testy*, *peevish*, and *unaccountable* Nature that *loves* and *hates* without any Reason, and is *pleased* or *displeased* as the *Toy* takes it. And having thus set up such a *grim* Idol of God in their Minds as they can by no means affect, they secretly *wish* there were no such Being, which is the *Brink* of Atheism. Thus their ghastly Apprehensions of God meeting with the *surly* and *churlish* Temper within them, instead of moulding them into Devotion to him, commonly *enrage* and *canker* them with Malice against him; and accordingly *Plutarch* well observes, οὐκ οἴεται Θεοὺς εἶναι ὁ ἄθεος, ὁ δὲ δεισιδαίμων οὐ βούλεται, *i. e.* the *Atheist* thinks there is no God, and he who hath dreadful Apprehensions of him *wishes* there were none; and he who *wishes* there were none, is but one remove from *believing* there is none. Thus you see in what a di-

a direct Line *Vice* leads to *Superstition*, and Superstition to *Atheism*. For *Pride* and *Wrath*, *Malice* and *Revenge* are naturally apt to ingender in Mens Minds *horrid* and *frightful Apprehensions* of God; which working on those *sour* and *rugged* Passions that begot them, are as apt to *exasperate* and *enrage* them against him; and then their *Reason* immediately takes Part with their *Passion*, and to gratify its *Wish* that there were no *God*, sets it self industriously to argue him out of his Being. But alas! what an unreasonable Procedure is this, for Men to *pin* their Faults upon God, and dress him in their own Deformities, and when they have thus *disguised* him by putting upon him their own frightful Tempers, as the old Persecutors did the Christians by wrapping them in Lions Skins, to set on their Wit and Reason to *worry* him out of his Being? what is this but to make a God as the Heathens did their *Mercuries*, and then fling Stones at him; to transform him into a *monstrous* Idol, and then *dislike* him, and then dash him in Pieces? But be not deceived, God will be what he *is*, a most *perfect*, *glorious* and *amiable* Being, how inglorious soever he may appear to you thro' the false *Medium* of your own diabolical Temper, which like *Crimson coloured* Glass will represent the fairest Objects to you *bloody* and *terrible*; but for you to *hate* God for no other Reason but because your own hateful Passions do reflect to you such an inglorious *Idea* of him, and then to *deny* him because you *hate* him, is equally *impious* and *unreasonable*.

III. Another great Cause of Atheism is *Rashness* and *Precipitancy* in *prescribing* to and *prejudging* the divine Providence, and this also most commonly arises from some great *Irregularity* in Mens Wills and Affections. For generally the *rash* Judgments which Men make of the *divine Providence*, are grounded on those *unequal Distributions* it makes of the good Things of this *World*, in prospering the *Bad* and afflicting the *Good*, upon which we are too often ready to charge it with being an *unequal* Arbitrator of Mens Fates. The Occasion of which is our *immoderate* Estimation of the Goods and Evils of this World. We so *inhance* the Goods of it in our Opinions, as to think them *great* enough to be the *Crowns* and *Rewards* of Virtue; and have such *horrible* Apprehensions of the *Evils* of it, as to imagine them *great* enough to be the *Plagues* and *Punishments* of the most *obstinate* and *notorious* Offenders. Whereas by the whole Course of his Providence it appears that God hath a different Esteem of them *both*; that he thinks the *best* Things of this World to be *bad* enough to be thrown away upon the most *despicable* Persons; and therefore to express his Scorn of these *admired* Vanities, he many Times scatters them with a *careless* Hand, as not thinking it worth the while to be so *exact* in the Distribution of them, as to put them in Gold Scales, and weigh them out to Mankind by *Grains and Scruples*. And as for the *worst* Things of this World, he thinks them not so *bad* but that they may be endured without any considerable Damage to the Sufferer; and therefore many Times suffers them to befal his own *Favourites*, as not thinking it of Moment enough to interpose his *Providence* to shield them against their *impotent* Impressions. And upon this Difference of *Judgment* Men too often ground an *inveterate* Quarrel against *God*, and because they *doat* upon this World, and think the *Goods* of it *good* enough to be the *Portion* of *good Men*, and the *Evils* of it *bad* enough to be the *Punishment* of *bad*, they are angry with *God* for not being of their Opinion, and are ready to *arraign* his Providence, and to conclude that this World is *govern'd* by a *blind* Chance that drops her *Favours* at random, as the full-plumed Hawk mews her loose Feathers, and never cares who stoops to take them up. And this *Ovid* ingeniously acknowledges of himself:

> *Dum rapiunt mala fata bonos, ignoscite fasso,*
> *Sollicitor nullos esse putare deos.*

While I behold ill Fates attend good Men, I am tempted to think there are no Gods.

> *Marmoreo Licinus tumulo jacet, at Cato parvo,*
> *Pompeius nullo; quis putet esse Deos?*

The Wicked Licinus *lies in a marble Tomb, but* Cato *in a small one, and* Pompey *in none; who would think there were Gods?*

So also there are others, who beholding themselves in the *flattering* Mirror of their own Self-conceit, are so taken with the Reflections of their own *Merit* and *Excellency*, as that they cannot see how 'tis possible but that if there *be* a God, he must *love* and *reward* them; and therefore, if instead of so doing, God either *deprives* them of those worldly Goods which they *doat* on, or *frustrates* them of those carnal Hopes for whose Accomplishment they have *earnestly* supplicated, they presently begin to *murmur* against him, and thence proceed to *arraign* the Justice of his Providence, and thence to *deny* both *that* and his *Being*. For thus it comes to pass, saith *Simplicius*, that such who have no grounded Belief of a Deity, when they observe the Miseries of *good* Men, and the Prosperities of *bad*, are without any regard to the common Notions of a God, ready to cry out with him in the *Tragedian*, Τολμῶ κατειπεῖν μήποτ' οὐκ εἶσιν Θεοί, κακοὶ γὰρ εὐτυχοῦντες ἐπιπλήττουσί με, i. e. *I dare affirm there are no Gods, because the wicked prosper that hurt me.* Thus from their fond Affection to these worldly Goods Men frequently take occasion to *quarrel* with God's Providence, for not appropriating them to be the Rewards of Virtue; and being once ingaged in a Quarrel against his *Providence*, their next Attempt is to dispute him out of his *Being*.

But what an unreasonable Way of concluding is this? I value this to be best and that to be worst, and therefore God ought to be of *my* Opinion, and to proceed accordingly in his Providence over the World: For there is nothing *can* be better or worse within the Prospect of an infinite Wisdom, than what I *apprehend* to be best and worst for Mankind; and therefore, if he will do Good to the Good, it must be in the Method that I shall prescribe him, that is to say, he must *crown* them with Rose-buds, and *clothe* them in Purple, and *feed* them with the Fat of the Land; and if he punish the Wicked, he must give *me* leave to give aim to his Arrows, and to *direct* him *how*, and *what*, and *when*, and *where* to shoot, and so long I am *contented* to allow him a Being in the World: But if he will presume to cross *my* Opinion of Things, and steer his Actions by the unerring Compass of his own infinite Wisdom; if he will rather choose to do Good to the Good by *chastening* than by *prospering* them, and to *avenge* himself upon the Wicked, by *fattening* them with Prosperity for Slaughter, I shall look upon it as such an Affront to *my* Judgment as will admit of no *meaner* Expiation than the *stripping* him out of his Providence and Being. And what can be more ridiculous than for Men to *deny* the Being of God, because his *Providence* sometimes crosses their foolish Opinions of Things, and doth not govern it self by the *crooked* Rules which they are pleased to prescribe it.

IV. Another great Cause of Atheism is vain *Affectation* of *Singularity* in Opinion; a Vice that hath been always incident to Men of *Speculation*, who valuing themselves upon the Stock of their Knowledge and deep Insight into the Nature of Things, have always affected to start new Notions, and *advance* contrary Hypotheses to the *received* Opinions of Mankind, that so they may be *vogued* for Men of *singular* Knowledge, and seem to have *taller* Understandings than the rest of their Brethren. And this, I doubt not, hath been one great Cause of *speculative Atheism*; for there is no Principle in Nature which hath been more *universally received* among Men than the Belief of a Deity, which doubtless is the *main Reason* why Men who affect Singularity, have been so *prone* to *quarrel* at it. It doth not comport with their Design of being thought *wiser* than the rest of the World, to submit their Understandings to *common* Notions and *universal* Doctrines; because, should they think as *other* Men do, they might probably be thought no wiser. Perhaps, had the Belief of a Deity been *lately* started, and only received by some *singular* Sect of Virtuosoes, these Men might have been as forward to *entertain* it as they are now to reject it; but because it is an *Old-fashion* Doctrine, in which all Ages and Nations have *concurred*, they think it would be a *discredit* to their Understanding to *wear* it, and therefore they set

their

their Wits at work to invent atheistical Hypotheses to solve the *Phænomena* of Nature without a Deity. And he that doth but impartially consider the *haughty* Genius of those Philosophers that laid the Foundations of *speculative Atheism*, may easily perceive that the great Motive of their Infidelity was nothing but a *proud Affectation* of thinking counter to Mankind. And indeed, could I but embrace the Doctrine of the *Transmigration* of Souls, I should be tempted to believe, by the *Likeness* of their Humours, that it was one and the same Soul that pass'd thro' *Democritus* into *Protagoras*, thro' *Protagoras* into *Epicurus*, and thro' *Epicurus* into Mr. *Hobbes*: And since they so exactly agreed in their *Pride* and haughty *Ostentation* of Knowledge, it is justly supposable that this was the *main* Cause of their *Agreement* in Atheism; which being a *singular* Doctrine, and directly *contradictory* to the *common* Notions of Mankind, was upon that Account more adapted to the Humour of these *arrogant* Philosophers. And accordingly, *Plato* describes the Atheists of his Age to be a *conceited* and *scornful* Sort of People, and declares the Cause of their Atheism to be ἀμάθεια μάλα χαλεπὴ δοκοῦσα εἶναι μεγίστη φρόνησις, *a certain pernicious Sort of Ignorance that put on a Semblance of the greatest Wisdom*: And afterwards he calls Atheism τ̀ παρὰ πολλοῖς δοξαζόμενον εἶναι σοφώτατον πάντων λόγων, *that which in the Eyes of some conceited People seemed to be the wisest of all Doctrines. De Leg. Lib.* 10. And because these *Atheistical* Philosophers, who were some of them *great* Masters of Wit and Learning, had the good luck to be *remarked* and *gazed* on, like so many *Anticks*, for their Singularity, they have always found Disciples and Followers among the People of *little* Sense, and a *great* deal of Vanity, who being Ambitious of the *Reputation* of the Wits and Philosophers, but having neither *Brains* nor *Industry* enough to merit it, are fain to *shelter* their Ignorance in Atheism, and there to face it out with *Laughter* and *Boldness*; and because by laughing at God and Religion they *deride* the common Faith of Mankind, they fansy themselves singularly *witty*, and expect that *others* should fansy them so too; whereas in reality these *little People* are but mere *Pretenders* to speculative Atheism. For before they can be *more*, they must comprehend the whole System of the atheistical Philosophy, and be able to describe all those supposed Laws of *Motion*, by which *Matter*, without the Conduct of a *Superior* Wisdom and Power, did originally *range* it self into this beautiful World, and to shew at least the *Possibility* of all the strange *Appearances* in Nature, without *suppposing* a God; which is such a task as their *feeble* Understandings durst never attempt; for the utmost they can pretend to is a few *Terms* of the *atheistical Philosophy*, which they have learned by *Rote*, and do *cant* and *smatter* with as much Skill and Understanding, as Parrots do the Lessons that are taught them. And tho the brisk young Gentlemen will sometimes *boldly* affirm, and if you dare take them up, will lay a *Wager* on it too, that *Reason* is nothing but a *Train* of *Imaginations*; that *Choice* is nothing but the *last stroke* of outward Objects on the *Fancy*; and that there is nothing in Nature but *Matter* and *Motion*; yet should you be so rude as to ask them what they mean by these Phrases, you would *uncase* their Ignorance and utterly *undo* them. So that such as these are only the *Hawkers* and *Retailers* of Atheism, that *noise* and *cry* it about; but have neither Wit nor Industry enough to *understand it*, but do take it up with the same *implicit* Faith as the Papists do their Religion. Thus as the *Ambition* of being accounted *wiser* than others, causes Men to affect *Singularity* in their Opinions, so the *Affectation* of Singularity in Opinion, doth very often transport Men into *Atheism*.

Now tho I would by no *means* plead for Mens *enslaving* their Understanding to *vulgar* Opinions, so as to put a *stop* to all Advancements of *Knowledge*, and hinder the *World* from ever growing *wiser*; yet doubtless, for Men to *quarrel* at Opinions for no other Reason but *because* they are *vulgarly* received, is not only a rude *Affront* to the Reason of Mankind; but also an effectual way to involve our selves in an endless *Labyrinth* of Mistakes. For while I *affect* to be singular in my Opinion, I *deprive* my Self of the Assistance of *other* Mens Understandings, and in my travel for Knowledge, choose rather to go *alone* by my

self

self thro' *untrodden* By-ways, than to keep the *Road*, and follow the *Tract* of those that have gone before me. So that unless I am *wiser* than all the World, which is very *unlikely*, it is a thousand to one but I *bewilder* and *lose* my self; for how *wise* and *sagacious* soever I may be, it is certain that *many* Heads are wiser than *one*; and therefore, when all Heads *concur* in the same Judgment, it is *probable* at least that *that* Judgment is *true*; he therefore who rejects an Opinion because *all* or *most* do imbrace it, *affects* to think counter to the *strongest* Evidence, and to believe against the *greatest* Probability. 'Tis true, in many Things the generality of Men have been *mistaken*, which is a sufficient Reason why we should not *pin* our Faith upon the Sleeve of *vulgar* Opinions, but impartially *examine* before we confidently *embrace* them; but yet there is a Reverence due to the *Judgment of Mankind*, and the Laws of *Modesty* require us not to be *confident* against it without very great Reason; but to *affect* to run counter to it, especially in such a Matter of Moment as the *Belief* or *Disbelief* of a Deity, is not only the highest *Arrogance* but the most extravagant *Madness*. For it is at *least* probable, that there is a God, because *all* Mankind do believe one, and if there *be* one, it is of *infinite* Moment that we should *believe* it, and *act* accordingly; and therefore for Men to turn Atheists out of mere *Singularity*, is not only to believe there is *no* God, because it is probable there *is*, but to *play* and *dally* with one's own Fate, and run the *hazard* of being eternally miserable out of a *wanton* Affectation of *contradicting* the Judgment of Mankind.

V. Another great Cause of Atheism is Custom of *drolling* on and *ridiculing* the most *serious* Things; a Humour which hath strangely prevailed in this *pleasant* and *jocular* Age, wherein the wild *Rovings* of Mens Fancies into *odd* Similitudes, *startling* Metaphors, *humorous* Expressions, and *sportive* Representations of Things, are grown more acceptable in almost all Conversations, than the most *solid* Reason and Discourse, and 'tis generally look'd upon as a far more *genteel* and *fashionable* Quality for a Man to be *Witty* than *Wise*. Now tho I do not deny but that Wit in it self is a very *useful* and *valuable* Indowment, and serves to many *excellent* purposes; as namely, to *polish* and *adorn* the most serious Truths, and represent them to Mens Minds in the most *comely* and *affecting* Dresses; to *expose* what is apparently *base* and *ridiculous*, and *lash* it with the *Satyrs* it makes against *it self*; to *quicken* and *give Life* to a solid Argument, and render it more *piercing* and *convictive*; and in a word, to *indear* our Society, and give a *relish* and *piquancy* to our Conversation, and to *recreate* our Minds after we have been *tired* out or *cloyed* with *severer* Occupations; tho Wit, I say, be a very useful Quality as to all these good Purposes, yet unless a *wise* Man hath the *keeping* it, that knows *when*, and *where*, and *how* to apply it, it is like Wildfire that flies at *Rovers*, runs *hissing* about, and *blows up* every Thing that comes in its way without any Respect or Discrimination. And indeed, the more *grave* and *serious* any Thing is, the more prone it will be to *expose* and *ridicule* it: For the *Life* of Wit consists in the *surprizingness* of its Conceits and Expressions, in making such *smart* or *uncouth Representations* of Things as are most apt to raise a *pleasing Wonder* and *Amazement* in those that hear us. Now there is nothing more *surprizing* in its own Nature, than to see or hear a *serious* Thing *sportfully* represented, and dress'd up in an *antick* and *ridiculous* Disguise; the very exposing it in a Garb and Figure so *unexpected*, because so very *unlike* and *unsuitable* to it self, is apt of its own Nature to *surprize* and *amuse* the Spectators or Hearers; which Surprize, if he be a *vain* Person, will *tickle* him into Laughter, but if he be *serious*, will affect him with *Detestation* and *Horror* to see a serious Thing so *contemptibly* treated. But the greatest Part of Men being of *vain* and *trifling* Spirits, that are *whiffled* up and down in little *Levities* of Fancy, there is nothing commonly doth more *gratefully* surprize them and provoke their *Laughter*, than *ridiculous* Representations of *serious* Arguments; and hence it comes to pass, that 'tis grown a great Instance of Wit among the generality of Men to *sport* and *play* with *serious* Things, to *burlesque* the Sense of them, and apply them to *ridiculous* Purposes; whereas, in reality, this *mistaken* Sort of Wit is nothing

but

but *dull* and *impudent* Buffoonery, and a very *little* Wit joined with a *great deal* of Saucineſs, will enable a Man to make *ſport* with the moſt ſerious Arguments. For 'tis but *clothing* them in *rude* and *porterly* Expreſſions, or *miſconſtruing* them to a *profane* or *ludicrous* Senſe, or *debauching* the Phraſes by which they are expreſſed to a *ſilly* or a *wicked* meaning, and it ſhall preſently be *cried up* for an excellent Jeſt, and the Author of it dubb'd a *Wit Laureat*. This therefore being ſo eaſy a way, for *dull* People to advance themſelves to the Reputation of *Wits*, hath of *late Years* eſpecially been mightily frequented by the *impotent* Well-wiſhers to Wit and Ingenuity; and becauſe *Religion* hath been always eſteemed the *moſt ſerious* Thing in the World, therefore they fix upon *that* as the *common* Theme of their *Raillery*, conſidering that the *more* ſerious it is, the more it will ſurprize Men to hear it *burleſqu'd* and *drolled on*. So that if they do but ſpeak *ſlightly* and *irreverently* of *God*, or never ſo *clowniſhly* ridicule a *Myſtery* of Religion, or clothe an *obſcene* Thought in a *Text of Scripture*; their *Saucineſs* will ſupply the Defect of their *Wit*, and Men will laugh not ſo much at the *Piquancy* of their *Conceit*, as at the *Boldneſs* and *Preſumption* of it: And becauſe their *Diſcourſe* had the *luck* to be *laughed* at, they think themſelves *celebrated* for the *Oracles* of Wit, and are thereby embolden'd to *proceed* in this their *impious* Buffoonery, till at laſt they have drolled themſelves into a *Contempt* of *God*, and from thence into *downright* Atheiſm. For tho a *Jeſt* be no *Argument*, nor yet a *loud Laughter* a *Demonſtration*, yet if you inſpect the Generality of our *little Pretenders to Atheiſm*, you will find *this* is the main Foundation that their Irreligion depends on; for their Gift conſiſts not in *arguing* and *demonſtrating*, but in ſuch a *Set* of *fine* Phraſes and *terſe* Oaths; and all the Stock of *Learning*, they pretend to, is a few *ſhavings* of *Wit*, gathered out of *Plays* and *Romances*, and theſe they *pin* upon *Religion*, as you have ſeen unhappy Boys do Rags at Mens Backs, to *expoſe* it to Scorn and Deriſion; and having accuſtomed themſelves to treat it with ſuch *rude* and *porterly* Contempt and Diſingenuity, it grows by degrees *cheap* and *vile* in their Eyes, and at laſt is rejected by them as a *ridiculous Impoſture*; and if *now*, when they are urged with *Evidences* of *Religion*, they have but Wit enough to anſwer *Reaſon* with *Drollery*, and to retort a *Jeſt* to a *Demonſtration*, how *glorioſly* do they imagine they have acquitted themſelves, and with what *triumphant* Shrugs do they celebrate their *Victory* over *the little Man in Black*.

Now tho for Men to *deride* what they do not *underſtand*, ſavours neither of *Learning* nor *good Manners*, and is equally unbecoming a *Gentleman* and a *Scholar*; and tho for a Man to venture to be *Damned* for deriding of God and Religion, is ſuch a Triumph of *Wit* as argues the utter *Defeat* of his *Reaſon*, yet ſo long as there are *vain* Men enough to be *tickled* with this profane Sort of Drollery, to be ſure there will never want *Fools* enough to *venture* on it. For when a *Fop* will needs aſpire to the Reputation of a *Wit*, he hath no other way but to dreſs up Religion in a *Fool's Coat*, and expoſe it for a Spectacle of *Deriſion*, and then how *dull* ſoever the Conceit be, the ſtupendous *Preſumption* of it will *ſurprize* and *amuſe* the Company, and Men will *admire* him juſt as they do *Rope-dancers*, for *daring* to *perform* what a wiſe Man would *tremble* to *attempt*; and being thus embolden'd by the *Admiration* and *Laughter* of his Company, which the *vain* Creature miſtakes for a *Proof* and *Evidence* of his Wit, he grows more *pert* and *confident*; and ſo *fools* and *fleers* on, till he hath *toyed* and *laughed* himſelf out of all Senſe of Religion.

But alas! what a *deſperate* Piece of *Folly* is this, for Men thus to *ſport* and *dally* with the *Almighty*, whoſe vengeance they can neither *withſtand* nor *endure*; to *point* and *make Mouths* at him to his Face, and ſet him up as the Finger-but of their *Scorn* and *Deriſion!* For certainly if there be Sins that can raiſe a Cry *loud* enough to reach *Heaven*, *this*, as a great *Author* of our own hath expreſſed it, will be ſo far from *whiſpering* there, that 'twill give an *Alarm* to the *Vengeance* of Heaven, whoſe *Inflictions*, like Stones tumbling from the Tops of Towers, will by ſo much the more *fatally* cruſh thoſe they *light* on, by how much the *longer* they are

falling

falling upon them. And therefore for Men thus to *dally* with their own *Fate*, to *venture* to be *damn'd*, that they may be thought to be *witty*, and expose themselves to endless *Wailing* and *Woe*, only to *raise a present Fit of Laughter*, is doubtless a far more desperate *Attempt*, than 'twould be to play at the Mouths of *Cannons*, while they are spitting Fire, or to lay hold on a *Thunderbolt*, as it comes roaring down from the Clouds.

But suppose there were neither *Evil* nor *Danger* in this *impious Practice*, yet for Men to conclude there *is* no God, because they have the *Confidence* to *scorn* and *despise* him, is altogether as *ridiculous*, as their despising him is *impious*. For there is nothing in Nature so *real* or *serious*, but may be *drolled* and *rallied* on; if a Man will set his Wits at work, he may *break Jests* upon *Pain*, and entertain his Company with *comical Representations* of the Groans and Agonies of *Dying*; but it would be a Jest *indeed*, should he *droll* himself into a *Belief* that there are no such Things as *Pain* or *Death*. But alas! Things are not to be alter'd by *Laughing* at them, and how merry soever we may make our selves with the *Belief* and *Notion* of a Deity, we shall one Day find *in earnest*, that he is not to be *jested* out of his *Being*.

VI. Another Cause of Atheism, is taking up *Religion*, or *Opinions* in *Religion*, without *Examination*. The Generality of Men do embrace their *Religion* as a Part of their *Fate*, as the Temper of their *Clime*, or the Entail of their *Ancestors*; and the Reason why they are *Christians* is, because Christianity had the luck to *bespeak* them first, and by its timely Interposure to *prepossess* and *forestal* them. So that, in all Probability, had *Mahometanism* plied them *first*, they would have had as much *Faith* for the *Alchoran*, as they have now for the *Bible*. Now when Men thus take up their *Religion* they know not *why*, their *Minds* must needs be left *naked* and *defenceless* to all the Temptations of *Atheism*. For when a Man can render no *Reason* for his Religion, his *Faith* hath nothing but blind *Prejudice* to support it; and 'tis with his *Will* that he believes, and not with his *Understanding*: So that he may choose whether he will *believe* or no, because he hath no *Evidence* to determine his *Understanding*. And how unstable and insecure must his Faith needs be, when it hath no other Foundation but a *fickle* and *inconstant* Will; when it lies at the mercy of his *Humour* and *Inclinations*, and it is in his Power to determine his Assent to *that* side of the Question which is most for his *Interest*? For now his Faith being determined by his *Will*, and his Will by his *Interest*, whenever he thinks it his *Interest* that there should be no God, to be sure he will be ready enough to believe that there *is* none; and consequently as soon as he grows *wicked* enough to *need* Atheism for a *Refuge* from his Conscience, he will betake himself thither in his own Defence, and endeavour by an obstinate *Disbelief* of God's *Being*, to shelter himself from the *Dread* of his *Power*. Thus when Mens *Belief* is not grounded upon *Reason* and *Evidence*, but stands *tottering* on the fickle Foundation of their *Wills*, it is liable to be *blown down* by every Blast of Temptation. And *hence*, I doubt not, in a great measure proceeds the *Irreligion* of the Age *we* live in; for if you survey the present *Sticklers* for Atheism, you will find they chiefly consist of the *hare-brain'd* and *uncatechised* Youths of the Town, who never troubled themselves to understand the first *Principles* of *Religion*, nor to consider the *Dependence* and *Connexion* of its *Doctrines*, and know nothing at all either of the admirable *Contexture* of the *Parts* of it, or of the *Reason* and *Evidence* of the *Whole*. For alas! their Study hath been employ'd another Way, *viz.* in courtly *Forms* of Speech and *Punctilio's* of Action, in *fashionable* Garbs and Oaths, and *artificial* Luxuries, in conning of fine Jests and Modes of *Address*, and *retailing* Fragments of Wit from Plays and Romances; but as for the *severer* and more *useful* Studies, they bequeath them to the *dull* Men *of Sense* and *Reason*.

Such as *these* are for the most part the *Sages* that *droll* upon Religion, and *make Jests* upon the *Scripture*; and what Wonder is it that such as these turn

 Infidels,

Infidels, who are never able to render any Reason of their *Faith?* For how weak soever the *Arguments* of *Infidelity* are, it is a hard Case if it cannot *baffle* that *Faith* which hath no Reason on its *side* to *guard* and *defend* it; especially when they are *seconded* with a Man's *Lusts* and *Inclinations*, as to be sure the *Arguments* of *Infidelity* will always be. For when a Man hath no Reason for his *Faith*, but a great many *Lusts* against it, the *slenderest* Shews of *Probability* will suffice to make him an Infidel. But what an horrible *Neglect* is it for Men that have Reason to *distinguish* between *Truth* and *Falshood*, to take no Care to inquire into the *Truth* and *Evidence* of their Religion, in which their greatest *Interest* is involved; but to *wink hard*, and believe at a *venture* they know not *why* or *what?* what is this, but to *cast Lots* for their *Souls*, and throw *Cross* or *Pile* for their eternal *Salvation?* They resolve, they say, to adhere to the Religion of their *Ancestors*, but whether that be *true* or *false* they never *inquire*; so that if it be *true* they may thank their *Stars* for it, but if it be *false* they have the worse *Luck*. Thus they wholly commit themselves to the *Conduct* of *Chance* to be conducted to *Heaven* or *Hell*, as it *happens*; and as if those *distant Fates* were indifferent to them, they concern not themselves to inquire whether the *Way* they are in be the *broad* or the *narrow*, the *right* or the *wrong*, but e'en leave the *Event* to determine it. And can any Thing in the *World* be more *wild* or *extravagant*, than for Men, who are so *sollicitous* about their smaller Concerns, who will not *purchase* an Acre of Land without examining the *Deeds* and *Evidences* by which the *Right* to it is convey'd, thus to take up their Religion upon *Trust*, and *stake* their everlasting *Fate* upon such a *desperate* Venture? But then for *Men* to take Occasion to *despise* and *reject* Religion from their own *sottish Neglect* to *inquire* into the *Truth* of it, is such an *height* of *Extravagance* as no *Bedlam* can parallel; it would be as *reasonable* for a Man to *put out* his *Eyes*, and then *resolve* not to *believe* there is a *Sun* in the *Firmament*, because he doth not see it, or to *stop up* his Ears, and then *peremptorily* deny the *Being* of Sounds, because he does not hear 'em: For, for Men thus to graft *Infidelity* upon *Ignorance*, is only to heap *one* Extravagance on *another*; if they understand *not* the *Evidence* of *Religion*, the more *Shame* it is for them, but methinks it might very well become them to be *modest* and *teachable* till they *do*; and in the mean while to take care to *inform* themselves *better*; but thus immediately to leap out of *Ignorance* into *Atheism*, is first to play the *Fool*, and then run *stark mad* upon it.

VII. Another Cause of *Atheism*, is Mens measuring the *Truth* or *Falshood* of Religion by the *Practice* of such as make the loudest *Pretence* to it. When a Man is unwilling to undergo the Trouble of satisfying his *own Reason* of the Truth of his Religion, his usual Method is to *inquire* what *other* Men think of it, who by the *zealous* Profession which they make, may be supposed to *understand* it better than *himself*; but because Mens Thoughts are *secret* and *invisible*, and do not always *correspond* with their *Words* and *Professions*; therefore to satisfy himself what other Men think of Religion, he concludes the safest Way is to judge by what they *do*, and not by what they *profess*; and so far indeed he is in the right. For to be sure, Mens *Actions* are a much more *certain* Index of their *Thoughts* than their *Words*; and therefore, when he sees those who *profess* Religion *act* as if they did not *believe* it, and observes how their *Words* do run a-tilt at their *Practice*, and how *broadly* their Lives *give the Lye* to their Professions, he presently concludes that whatever they *pretend*, they are *Infidels* in their Hearts; and being once perswaded that those whom he thinks do best *understand* Religion, do not *believe* it, he thence immediately concludes, that they find no *Reason* to believe it, and do only put on the *Profession* of it as an *Angelical* Vizor, being minded to play the *Devils* in it with more Credit and Security. And by this popular Way of Reasoning, they conclude Religion to be nothing but a politick *Device* and *Engine*, which wise Men have contrived to *beguile* and *manage* the simple; and that whatsoever is *pretended* for it, it is a mere *Juggling-box* which Knaves play tricks with to

delude

delude and *cozen* Fools. And of this Way of Mens reasoning themselves into Atheism, the Age we live in is full of woful Instances; for now a-days to *scorn* and *despise* Religion, is no longer the Prerogative of *Wits* and *Virtuosoes*, but the Infection is spread and propagated into *Shops* and *Stalls*, and the *Rabble* are become *Professors* of Atheism. Now whence should this proceed? alas! it is not to be supposed, that such Persons as these should ever be able to *philosophize* themselves into Infidelity, and turn *Atheists* either upon *Aristotle*'s or *Epicurus*'s Hypotheses; no, no, their Argument lies *nearer home*, and more *open* to their Capacities: They have seen a World of *vile Tricks* play'd in our Religious *Carnivals* and *Masquerades*; some making their Religion a *Sanctuary* for their *Treasons* and *Rebellions*; others gilding over their *Faction* and *Sedition* with a specious Pretence of *Zeal* for God's Glory: Some prosecuting their own *Revenge* and *Ambition* under the Ensigns of *pure Worship* and *true Protestant Religion*; others *commuting* for their Excesses of *Riot* with a clamorous Zeal for *Decency* and *Order*, and others *picking Pockets* with *one* Hand, while they have been lifting up the *other* to Heaven in *Devotion*; the Sight of which hath tempted the *rude* and unthinking Vulgar to look upon Religion as a mere *Castle in the Air*, that hath no Foundation but in the *Invention* of Knaves and in the *Faith* of Fools.

Now, tho there is no *Doubt* to be made, but that these vile *Hypocrites*, who have laid this *Stumbling-block* in Mens Way, shall one Day *dearly* answer for the *Ruin* of those whom it occasion'd to *fall*, and for thus *exposing* the Credit and Reputation of Religion to the *Misprisions* of those that do not *understand* it; yet it is a most inexcusable Piece of *Folly*, for Men thus to *infer Atheistical* Conclusions from the ill Example of *Hypocritical Professors*. For, in the first Place, to conclude a Man an *Infidel*, because his Actions run *counter* to the Faith he pretends to, is very *rash* and *fallacious*: For, do we not see Men very often act against their Consciencies, and fly in the face of their *own* Convictions? Why may we not then as fairly suppose those wicked Actions we argue from, to be the Effects of an *obstinate* Will as of an *infidel* Judgment? But suppose it were true, that those Men were all *Infidels*, that do thus act against their *Faith*, doth it therefore follow, that you must turn Infidels too? If it be so *unsafe* and so *unworthy* of a Man to carry his Brains in other Mens *Heads*, what a Shame is it to carry them in other Mens *Heels*, and to suffer his Faith to be led by the *Tract* of their Examples thro' all the wild *Mazes* of Irreligion and Atheism?

But you will say, by these Mens Examples you plainly see what a Mystery of Iniquity there is in *Religious Pretences*; and what then? Must Religion be a *Cheat* because bad Men *play Tricks* with it, and make it a *Cloke* for their Knavery? If so, then the best Things in the World are liable to *Suspicion*; because there is nothing so *good* but what is capable of being prostituted to very *ill* Purposes: I confess, when we see so many *Cheats* acted under the *Mask* of Religion, we have just reason to call it to a more *severe* Examination, and to inquire more narrowly into the Proofs and Evidences upon which it is founded; but presently to reject Religion, because *Knaves* and *Hypocrites* make bold to disguise themselves in it, is every whit as *absurd* and *ridiculous*, as if a Man should deny that there is any such Virtue as *Chastity* in the World, because there are common *Prostitutes* that pretend to it.

VIII. Another Cause of Atheism is *Divisions* and *Schisms*, formed out of little Opinions in Religion. For it is natural to Men to place a great Part of their Religion in those Opinions, for whose sake they divide and *separate* from each other; so that if *hereafter* they happen to be dissatisfy'd with those Opinions, of which they are excessively fond at *the present*, they will be under a great Temptation to suspect *Religion it self*, as if that were as ill-grounded as those *little Opinions* which they laid so great a *Stress* on; and so after they have run thro' several *Sets* of Opinions, and in fine have discovered them to be *all* Delusions, they are ready to conclude Religion *it self* to be nothing but a

System of *Lies* and *Impostures*. For as weak Heads when they perceive the *Battlements* shake, are apt to suspect the *Foundations*; so weak Understandings will be prone to suspect even the *Fundamentals* of Religion, when once they perceive those darling Notions *totter*, which they have confidently presumed to *superstruct* thereupon.

And upon this account, I make no doubt but that the Irreligion of this Age is very much to be attributed to the *Sects* and *Divisions* of it. For how many woful Examples have we of Persons who had once a great *Zeal* for and *Satisfaction* in Religion, that upon their *causeless* Separation from the Church's Communion, have run from *Sect* to *Sect*, and from *one* extravagant Opinion to *another*, till at last being convinced of the *Cheats* and *Impostures* of them all, they have totally discarded Religion *it self*, and made their last Resort into *Atheism*. And as separating into Parties, upon *little* Differences in Religion, exposes the Separatists *themselves* to great Temptations to Atheism, so it doth those also who are *indifferent* on both sides, and stand engaged on *neither* Part of the Separation. For whilst these Men behold the State of Religion thus miserably *broken* and *divided*, and the Professors of it *crumbled* into so many *Sects* and *Parties*, and each Party spitting *Fire* and *Damnation* at its Adversary; so that if *all* say true, or indeed any *two* of them in *five hundred Sects*, which there are in the World, (and for all I know, there may be *five thousand*) it is *five hundred* to one but that every one is *damn'd*, because every *one* damns *all* but it self, and *it self* is damn'd by *four hundred ninty and nine*; so that 'tis a mighty Chance if in so great a Volly of *Anathema's*, which *every one* hath levelled at it, *any one* escape: When, I say, unengaged Persons that are not able to distinguish between the *disputable Opinions* that constitute these Sects, and the *Necessaries* and *Essentials* of Religion, shall reflect upon this Tumult and Confusion of Faiths, they will be apt to conclude, without farther *Inquiry*, that *Religion* itself is nothing but an infinite *Maze* of *disputable Opinions*, wherein Men wander about in the *dark*, and *justle* and *run-counter* one another without any certain *Clew* on either side to *guide* and *direct* their *Inquiries*; under which Misapprehension they will either damn *all* Religion for a *Cheat*, or *hover* about in eternal *Uncertainty*, not knowing where, in so great a Confusion of Religions, to *fix* and *settle* their Faith. And hereunto, I doubt not, is to be attributed a great Part of the *Irreligion* of this Age. For while some Men, by running themselves out of Breath in pursuit of those *Ignes fatui*, or *New Lights*, that have broken and divided our *Communion*, have at length quite tired out their *Zeal*, and *religious Pretences*, and so are at length laid down in the Mire of *Irreligion* and open *Profaneness*; others, by looking on and beholding the wild *Divisions* which these New Lights have made, have been tempted to *run away* from Religion itself, as if that were only a *Labyrinth* of uncertain Opinions, contrived on purpose to *distract* and *bewilder* Mens Brains.

Now tho the Authors of these *Divisions*, whosoever they are, are doubtless highly accountable to God for all that Irreligion which attends them, yet for Men from hence to draw Atheistical Conclusions, is much more imputable to the *Perverseness* of their *Wills*, than to the *Weakness* of their *Understandings*.

For in the first place, What if you have discovered some Opinions in Religion to be *false* and *erroneous*, of the Truth of which you were once very *confident*; doth it therefore follow, that there is nothing certain in *Religion*? If so, you may as well conclude that there is nothing *certain* in the *Mathematicks* neither, since some Men have been as confident of the Truth of false *Axioms* in *Geometry*, as ever you could be of false *Propositions* in *Religion*. That you were once *over-confident* in a disputable Matter, was your own *Fault* and *Folly*, but must it therefore follow that *Religion* is a *Cheat*, because you have been rash and inconsiderate? and what tho you once laid the great *stress* of your *Religion* upon an *Opinion* which you *now* discern is *erroneous*, must *Religion*

ligion needs suffer for your *Mistake*, and be branded for an *Imposture*, because you took that for *Religion* which was *not?* For there are a thousand *Propositions* about *Religion*, which have been zealously disputed *for* and *against*, which have torn Men into *Sects*, and been the *Religion* of the *separate Communions* they have *formed* and *denominated*, that yet are very remote *Superstructures* on the true *Foundations* of *Religion*, and may be *true* or *false*, *believed* or *disbelieved*, without any *Damage* to *Religion*. And therefore before you suspect the *Truth* of *Religion* it self, upon your discovering the *Falshood* of any *particular Opinion*, you ought in all reason to consider whether that *Opinion* be so *essential* to *Religion* as that it cannot *subsist* without it: for if it be not, 'tis the most unreasonable thing in the *World*, to infer a suspicion of the *Truth* of *Religion* from the *Falshood* of *Propositions* that have *little* or *no* Dependence on it, and to reject the *Gold* and the *precious Stones* for the sake of the *Wood*, and *Hay*, and *Stubble* that have been superstructed upon them. And then,

2. What can be more absurd than for Men to *reject* Religion, because Mens *Opinions* about it have been so *divided?* For, if you survey the several *Divisions* of *Christians*, you will find they generally *concur* in all the *necessary* and *essential* Doctrines of Religion, and that the Opinions wherein they *divide*, are, for the most part, such *unnecessary* Speculations, as that it is almost *indifferent* to Religion whether they be *true* or *false*; and with what reason can we suspect the Truth of *necessary* Doctrines wherein *all* are agreed, because there are Disagreements in unnecessary ones? Because there are some Propositions in the *Mathematicks*, about which the Opinions of the *Mathematicians* are *divided*, shall we therefore suspect the Truth of all those wherein they are *agreed?* For if their *Disagreement* be an Argument of the *Falshood* of the *former*, why should not their *Agreement* be as good an Argument of the *Truth* of the *latter?* But how much soever Mens Opinions about Religion may be *divided*, all that can be thence inferred, is, that some Men are *mistaken*; and while some Men judge of Religion by their *Passions* and *Interests*, and others by the Prejudices of their *Education*, it is impossible it should be otherwise. But for Men in the Midst of such apparent Causes of Difference, to resolve to be of *no* Religion till all are agreed in *one*, is just as *wise* and as *rational* as if they should determine not to go to Dinner till all the Clocks in the Town strike Twelve together.

IX. And lastly, Another great Cause of *Atheism* is the *profane* and *careless* Neglect of God's *Publick Worship*. For Men of *Secular* Lives, whose Minds are always engaged in this *eternal Hurry* of *worldly* Affairs, are too prone to forget God, and all their Concerns in *Religion* and *another World*; and even their conversing so much with these *sensitive* things which are always before them, and are continually *crouding* in upon their Thoughts, doth naturally *indispose* them to exercise their Faculties about *divine* and *spiritual* Objects, and render their Minds ὀπίσω βαρεῖς, *unfit* and *unable* to ascend to the Contemplation of God. And therefore God hath appointed the *stated* Times of *Publick Worship*, on purpose to withdraw Men from their *secular* Pursuits, that so they may be at leisure to *retire* into themselves, to *recollect* their scatter'd Thoughts, and *awake* their Minds to a Sense of *Piety* and *Religion*; which can by no way so effectually be *perform'd* as by the Solemnities of *Publick Worship*, wherein our *Remembrance* of God is not only *refreshed*, and our *Piety* to him *excited* and *directed* by the Publick Instructions, but our natural Sense of Religion is also *actuated* and *intended* by the mutual *Concurrence* and *Example* of each others Devotion. Thus, after our Religion hath been *slacken'd* by our worldly *Cares* and *Delights*, it is duly *wound up* again by the Returns of our Publick Worship, and so the Sense of God is still *kept alive* in our Minds. When Men therefore turn their Backs upon the *Publick Worship*, and devote the *holy Seasons* of it to their secular Business or Pleasures, it is not to be wonder'd at, that their Sense of a Divine Power, which they seldom or never *think of*, should by degrees

decay

decay and *wear off*; and that *that* being extinguished, they should sink into *Irreligion* and *Atheism*. For when once Men have *worn* out their *Sense* of a *Deity*, and, as the *Consequence* of that, are broke loose from all the *Ties* and *Obligations* of *Conscience*, they can have no other *Principle* but Atheism to *warrant* their Actions; and when once they have abandoned all *Sense* and *Remembrance* of God, so that he is not in all their Thoughts, they are in a fair Forwardness to *Infidelity*. For tho as yet they do not actually *disbelieve* his *Existence*, so neither do they actually *believe* it; for how should they actually believe *that* which they have no *Sense* or *Thought* of? so that in this insensible *State* their Faith is *concerned* neither *one* way nor *t'other*, nor are they at all *solicitous* whether there *be* a God or *no*. Thus, from their *profane neglect* of God's Worship, Men naturally slide into an habitual *Senselessness* and *Incogitancy* of him, and from thence to *not believing*; and from thence to *disbelieving* him is an *easy* and almost *necessary* Transition.

Of the *Truth* of which, the *Age* we live in will furnish us with too many *sorrowful* Instances. For as this Nation, which hath been always *remarked* for a *grave*, *serious*, and *religious Genius*, was never so generally *tainted* with Atheism as now; so neither was it ever *chargeable* with such a general Neglect of the Publick Worship of God, which for several Ages after the Reformation was duly *frequented*, and devoutly *celebrated*, till by the Prevalence of our *restless* Sects and Factions, the *Discipline* of the Church was gradually *weaken'd*, and at last totally *destroy'd*; in the happy Days before which, the Families of each Parish went *hand in hand* together to the House of God, and with *one* Heart and Voice celebrated his Praise and Worship; and to absent one's self *ordinarily* from the Publick Assemblies, was hardly consistent with the *Reputation* of being a Christian. By which means their natural *Sense* and *Dread* of the Divine Power, being continually *awakened* and *revived*, they were not only *secured* by it from all Atheistical Impressions, but also *animated* and *excited* to a pious and sober Conversation. But the Spirit of Schism prevailing against the Power and Discipline of the Church, till it had utterly *disabled* it from restraining the Wantonness of that *crooked* and *perverse* Generation; some incorporated themselves into *separate Communions*, and others, under pretence of so doing, withdrew from the *Publick Assemblies* to the common Resorts of *Idleness*, *Drunkenness* and *Debauchery*; and whilst the *Masters* took the Liberty of *Conscience* to go to *Conventicles*, the *Servants*, pretending to be of a different Persuasion, assumed the Liberty of *Will* to go to *Taverns* and *Ale-houses*; insomuch that it grew a common Observation, that there have been more young People debauch'd on the *Lord's Day*, than all the *Week after*, whilst under pretence of *joining* with a different Communion, they have taken occasion to *withdraw* themselves from the Inspection of their Parents and Masters. And till once our Schisms and Divisions are *cured*, it will be impossible to *prevent* this ill Practice, unless we will be so unjust as to deny *that* Liberty of Conscience to our Servants, which with so much *Clamour* and *Confidence* we demand of our Governors. And thus, by degrees, *Profaneness* hath insinuated it self under the Covert of *Schism*, and *Liberty of Conscience* became a *common Sanctuary* for the licentious *Neglect* and *Contempt* of God's Worship, till at last it grew so *common* and *fashionable*, that it almost ceas'd to be *scandalous*. Yea, so far at length hath this *impious Humour* prevailed, that to *go to Church*, and be *devout*, is among too many Men grown a Note of *Disgrace*, and the Character of a *Priest-ridden* Fool; and a Man is hardly look'd upon as fit for *genteel Conversation*, that knows any other Use of a *Holy-day*, but only to be at leisure to *lie a-bed*, or to *Game*, or *Drink* and *Debauch*; by which Neglect and Contempt of the *Worship* of God, that natural Sense of him, which should have been *quickened* and *cherished* by it, hath been gradually *worn out* of Mens Minds; the Consequence of which, is all *that Atheism* and *Infidelity* that over-spreads this present Age. For when once Men have *renounced* the Worship of God, and in consequence are *aban-*

doned of their natural Senſe of his Majeſty, they are upon the Brink of *Atheiſm*, into which their own *vile* Luſts, whoſe Intereſt it is that there *ſhould* be no *God*, will eaſily *precipitate* them. But alas! how *ridiculous* as well as *impious* is it for Men to take Occaſion from their own *Neglect* of God's Worſhip, to renounce the *Belief* of his Being? what is this but to *tail* one Folly to another, and to ſecond *Extravagance* with *Madneſs*? It would make one amazed to think that ever *reaſonable Beings* ſhould be ſo *beſotted*, as to live in a *World* over which an Almighty Being *preſides*, who ſees all their Actions, and in whoſe Hands all Events are which concern them, and even the *everlaſting* Fate of their *Souls*; and yet take no more *notice* of him, pay no more *Reſpect* or *Veneration* to him, than if he were the meereſt *Trifle*, or moſt inſignificant *Cypher* in the whole Creation. But ſure, when Men have been guilty of ſuch a *black* and *horrid* Impiety, one would think their wiſeſt Courſe for the Time to come ſhould be to *repent* of it, and to endeavour to *compenſate* for their paſt Profaneneſs by the Strictneſs and Sincerity of their future Devotion; but for Men to proceed from *neglecting* God's Worſhip to *denying* his Being, is to do *worſe* becauſe they have done *ill*, and thereby to *inflame* the Provocation, as if they were reſolved to render their Condition *deſperate*, becauſe they have been ſo *foolhardy* as to render it *dangerous*.

And thus I have given a ſhort Account of the common *Cauſes* of Atheiſm, which, you ſee, are all derived from Mens *Wills*, and not from their *Reaſon*. For this I do moſt firmly believe, that the Arguments of God's Exiſtence are ſo *plain* and *convincing*, that no Man ever *was* or *can be* an Atheiſt without ſome inexcuſable Fault in his *Will*.

SECT. II.

Of the inexcuſable Folly *and* Unreaſonableneſs *of* Atheiſm.

THE next Thing I propoſed, was to endeavour to *confirm* and *eſtabliſh* this great Principle of Religion, *viz.* the *Belief* of a *God*, by repreſenting the great *Folly* and *Unreaſonableneſs* of Atheiſm. In diſcourſing of which, I ſhall meddle no more than needs muſt with the *Proofs* and *Arguments* of a Deity; becauſe, as I have ſhew'd before, 'tis not for Want of *Arguments* that Men turn Atheiſts, but for Want of *Conſideration*, and an honeſt *Will*; and that the *Bias* that carries them towards *Infidelity*, is not in their *Underſtandings*, but in their *Wills* and *Affections*; that 'tis only their *Partiality* to their *Luſts*, that inclines them to Atheiſm; and that the Reaſon why they are ſo ready to *believe* that there *is* no God, is, becauſe they *wiſh* in their Hearts that there *were* none. To eſtabliſh the Belief of a God, therefore, I ſhall endeavour to repreſent the *Folly* and *Unreaſonableneſs* of Mens being partial on the Side of Atheiſm, ſuppoſing it were *diſputable* whether there *be* a God or *no*; and this will evidently appear in the following Particulars:

I. The Atheiſt concludes againſt the *Dignity* of *human Nature*, and renders it not only *mean*, but *ridiculous*.

II. He concludes againſt the very *Being* and *Well-being* of *human Society*.

III. He concludes againſt that which is the main *Support* and *Comfort* of *human Life*.

IV. He concludes for *that* Side of the Queſtion which is infinitely the moſt *unſafe* and *hazardous*.

V. He concludes for the unſafeſt Side of the Queſtion upon the *higheſt Uncertainties*.

VI. He plainly *contradicts himſelf* in his *Concluſion*.

I. The *Atheiſt* concludes againſt the *Dignity* of *human Nature*, and thereby renders it not only *mean* but *ridiculous*. For the chief *Worth* and *Dignity* of *human Nature* conſiſts in its Relation to *God*, without whom its *nobleſt* and

 moſt

most *excellent Faculties* are in a great measure useless and *insignificant*; for if there be *no* God, the Objects of our five Senses are the *sole Entertainment* of our Understanding and Will, and we have no other Use of these mighty *Faculties*, (which if there were any such Thing as an *infinite Truth* and *Goodness*, are naturally capable of enjoying him) but only to *consult* and *choose* the Gratifications of our *Sense*, and the *Pleasures* of this perishing *Body*. For, excepting *God*, there is no such Thing in *Nature* as a *spiritual Enjoyment*, no *Good* to be found, but what is prepar'd to entertain the boundless *Liquorishness* of our *carnal Appetites*; and had we none but such as *these* to consult for, our *Reason*, which is the *Crown* and *Glory* of our *Natures*, would have *nothing* else to do but to *cater* for our *Flesh*, and we should have an Understanding and Will to no other Purpose, but to enable us to play the *Brutes* with more *Skill* and *Sagacity*. And indeed, setting *God* aside, we are so far from having the Advantage of *Brutes*, by being *rational*, that we are rather so much the more *wretched* and *despicable* than *they*. For, as for the Happiness of *this Life*, which wholly consists of *sensual* Good, the *Senses* and *Appetites* we have in *common* with the *Beasts* that perish, are sufficient for the Enjoyment of it; and with these we might relish it, as well *without* our *Reason* as with it: We might *eat* and *drink* and *sleep*, and enjoy all the Pleasures of a Brute with as much *Gust* and *Savour*, as we do now with our Reason. For if we *were* Brutes, we should do as Brutes *do*; we should *weary* our selves no longer with *vain* Pursuits, nor *vex* our selves with *fruitless* Expectations, nor *torment* our selves with the *Fears* of a Disappointment; but e'en take our Pleasures when our Appetites *craved* 'em, and they freely *offered* themselves to our Enjoyment. And tho our *Reason* doth sometimes *cook* the Enjoyments of our Sense, and give them a higher *Relish* and *Luxury*, yet this Advantage is very much out-weighed by the many *Regrets* and *Remorses*, and *stinging Reflections* it intermingles with our Pleasures: So that had we only the Faculties of *Brutes*, I am verily persuaded we should more *sincerely* enjoy the Happiness of the *Brutal* Nature, but to be sure we should bear our Miseries with much more *Ease* and *Chearfulness*. For, supposing there *is* no God, our Reason can afford us no solid Support under any Calamity; the main Arguments of Comfort, as I shall shew by and by, being derived from the Consideration of *God* and his *Providence*; which being taken away, I doubt not but we should bear our Miseries *without* our Reason, much better than *with* it. For then we should neither be *terrified* at the *Approach* of them, nor *tormented* with *Despair* under them; then we should neither *multiply* them with *false* Opinions, nor *enrage* them with *bitter* Reflections on the Causes of them; but whenever they happen, bear them as *Beasts* do, without any other Pain or Uneasiness than what they necessarily *impressed* on our *Senses*, which would render them a thousand times more tolerable to us, than all our *Arguments* can do, supposing we have no *God* nor *Providence* to argue from.

So that were that *true* which the Atheist concludes for, *viz.* That there is *no* God; it would follow, that *Reason* in a Man serves to no other Purpose, but to render him more *wretched* and *despicable*. If there *be* a God indeed, our rational Faculties are of *excellent* Use; as having an Object *commensurate* to their widest Capacities, and every Way *fit* and *worthy* to *employ* and *exercise* them; an infinite *Truth* for our *Understanding* to dive into, and an infinite *Good* for our *Wills* and *Affections* to pursue and embrace. But if there be nothing to be enjoyed by us, but what is *carnal* and *sensual*, our Reason is so far from being our *Ornament* and *Perfection*, that it is the *Plague* and *Disgrace* of our Natures.

For, for any Nature to have more Faculties than what are necessary to its Happiness is *monstrous*; and therefore had we nothing to enjoy but the Happiness of *Brutes*, 'twould be a *Deformity* to our Natures to have the Faculties of *Angels*; because these *Faculties* would be in *vain*, there being no *adequate*

quate Object in the nature of Things to *employ* and *entertain* them. So that were the Doctrine of the Atheiſt *true*, it would caſhier our Reaſon for a *vain* and *uſeleſs* Faculty; a Thing that ſerves our *Nature* to little other *purpoſe*, but only to vex and diſquiet it. And what Man, that hath any *Regard* or *Reverence* for himſelf, would ever be fond of a Belief that thus *ſinks* and *depreciates* him, and lays the Glory of his Nature in the *Duſt*? For if it be true that there *is* no God, it is as true that Man is a moſt *deſpicable Creature*, that his *Reaſon*, upon which he ſo much values himſelf, is a *frivolous* and *impertinent* Faculty; a Faculty that can ſerve him to no higher Purpoſe than only to be a *Cook* and a *Tailor* to his Body, to ſtudy *Sauces* and *Faſhions* for it; and that while it *ſerves* him in *this*, *diſſerves* him in a thouſand *other* Inſtances, in mingling his Pleaſures with *Gall* and *Wormwood*, with *Fears* and *Impatiencies*, *Anxieties* and *Remorſes*, and in *aggravating* and *putting Stings* into his Griefs and Calamities. So that when all is done, the only thing that makes it *worth the while* for a Man to be *reaſonable* is, that there is a Being of infinite Perfection to be *known*, and *loved*, and *imitated*, and *adored* by him; and to deny the Exiſtence of this bleſſed Being, is infinitely to *undervalue* our ſelves, and to *eclipſe* the Glory and Dignity of our Natures. So that by being partial to *Atheiſm*, we are partial to our own *Shame* and *Diſgrace*, and induſtriouſly conſult the *Reproach* and *Infamy* of human Nature; for the Devil himſelf cannot affix a blacker *Scandal* on our Reaſon, than what is implied in this Aſſertion, That there *is* no God.

And as it lays the greateſt *Reproach* upon our Nature, ſo it alſo renders us the moſt *ridiculous* of all Beings. For there are certain *Affections* interwoven with human Nature, which, if there be no God, are ſhamefully *ridiculous*; ſuch as the *Dread of inviſible Powers*, the *Senſe of Good and Evil*, and the anxious Expectation of a *Judgment to come*; all which are ſo deeply *inlaid* in our *Beings*, as that with all our *Arts* and *Reaſoning* we cannot totally *eraſe* them. And even the *Atheiſts* themſelves, who have tried all poſſible Ways of *extinguiſhing* them, have found by Experience that the *utmoſt* they can do, is to *damp* and *ſtupify* them at preſent; but that in deſpite of them they will revive and *awake* again when *Death* or *Danger* approaches them. Now, how *ridiculous* are theſe Affections in human Nature, if there be no ſuch Being as a God? For upon this Suppoſal, we have *Paſſions* that have no *Objects* in the Nature of Things, that have *nothing* in the World to *move* and *affect* them, but *wild Chimera's*, *flying Dragons*, and *Caſtles in the Air*; and whereas all other Beings have *real* Objects in Nature correſponding to their ſeveral *Inſtincts* and *Affections*, (For ſo the *Hare* hath a natural Dread of a *Dog*, the *Sheep* of a *Wolf*, the *Mouſe* of a *Cat*, the *Toad* of a *Spider*, all the Objects of which Dread have a *real* Exiſtence) poor ſilly Man, ſuppoſing there is no *God*, naturally trembles at an *inviſible* Nothing, and is horribly *afraid* of the *Shadow* of an *Imagination*. So that if the Atheiſt's Opinion were true, the *Ape* that looks pale at the Sight of a *Snail*, and flies as if he feared leſt that ſlow Creature ſhould overtake and devour him, would be a great deal leſs *ridiculous* than *timorous* Man, whoſe Nature is thus *hagg'd* with *frightful* Imaginations of inviſible Powers and a Judgment to come.

And what Man that hath any Reverence for the human Nature within him, would ever ſuffer himſelf to be *bribed* for an Opinion that doth not only *undervalue*, but *deride* and *ridicule* it. Should you hear your ſelf branded with a *contemptible* Character, or ranked among *Apes* or any ſuch *ridiculous* Animals, you would doubtleſs be ſo far from *courting* the Author of it, that you would *reſent* it as a great Affront, and think your ſelves obliged in *Honour* to return the *Provocation*; and yet for the *ſake* of a few baſe *Luſts*, which are the *Shame* and *Scandal* of your *Natures*, you eſpouſe the Cauſe of *Atheiſm*, tho it derides and *affronts* you to your Face, and *ſtains* the Glory of your Natures with the moſt *contemptible* and *ridiculous* Character in the World.

II. The Atheist concludes against the very *Being* and *Well-being* of *human Society*. For the Soul, that *penetrates* thro' all human Society, and *compacts* and *unites* it in a regular Body, is Religion, or the *Sense* and *Acknowledgment* of a *Divine Power*, without which all the Parts of the *Corporation* of Mankind, like the Members of a *dead Body*, must necessarily *disband* and *fly abroad* into *Atoms*. For a *form'd Society*, which is an *united* Multitude, consists in the *Harmony* and *Consent* of its Members mutually *united* by Laws and Agreements, and *dispos'd* into a regular Subordination to one another, neither of which can any *human Society* long continue, without the *Belief* and *Acknowledgment* of a *God*.

For without this, in the first place, 'tis impossible that the *Parts* of any *Society* should continue *united* by Laws and Agreement. For 'tis from the Belief of a *God*, that all the *Obligations* of *Conscience* are *derived*; so that take away *that*, and *these* must dissolve; and when the Obligations of *Conscience* are *dissolved*, there is nothing but Mens *temporal Interests* can oblige them to *conform* to those Laws and mutual Agreements, by which they are united to one another. And if it be their *Interest* only that obliges them to be *just* and *faithful* to their mutual Agreements, they will be equally obliged to be *unjust* and *unfaithful*, whenever it is their *Interest* to be so. So that this Principle, which only obliges them to be *honest*, while it is for their *Advantage*, will as effectually oblige them to be *Knaves* whenever the Case is *altered*; and Things being reduced to this Issue, there remains no *Foundation* of Trust and mutual *Confidence* among Men. For what can any Man's *Promise* signify, if he be under no Obligation but *Interest*? To be sure, if it be *for* his *Interest*, he will *do* what he *says* without any *Promise*; but if it be *not*, what *Promise* can oblige him? You will say, It is his *Interest* to keep his *Word*, because otherwise he will forfeit his *Reputation* for the future: But pray what Reputation can a Man have to *forfeit*, that owns no other *Law* or *Obligation* but his Interest? Or who will ever presume upon that Man's *Word* and *Engagement*, whose *avowed Principle* it is to be *honest* no longer than he can *gain* by it? Thus Atheism, you see, resolves all our *Obligations* into our *worldly Interest*, which is so *fickle* and *mutable* a Principle, so dependent upon *Chance* and the *Inconstancies* of *Fortune*, that there is no hold to be taken of those that are governed by it. For that which is their *Interest* to *Day*, may be their Disadvantage to *Morrow*; and if it should *so* happen, they must steer a *contrary* Course, or else act *contrary* to their leading Principle. So that for Men to trust each other upon this *fickle Principle*, is all one as to rely upon the Constancy of a *Weather-cock*, which every contrary Wind turns to a contrary Position. And Things being once reduced to *this* Issue, that Men can place no *Trust* or *Confidence* in one another, their *Society* will soon become their greatest *Plague* and *Vexation*. For *every Man* will be forced to stand upon his Guard against *every Man*, and keep himself *reserved* and *retired* within himself; till at last, out of mutual *Distrust* and *Jealousy* of one another, they are forced to *withdraw* their Society, and to live *apart* in separate Dens for Fear of being *intrapped* and *devoured* by each other.

And as *Atheism* cuts in sunder those *Ligaments* of mutual *Trust* and *Agreement* by which the Parts of human Society are united; so it also *dissolves* that regular Subordination that is between them. *Plutarch* observes, in his Treatise against *Colotes*; Πόλις ἂν μοι δοκεῖ μᾶλλον ἐδάφους χωρὶς, ἢ πολιτεία τῆς περὶ Θεῶν δόξης ἀναιρεθείσης παντάπασι, σύστασιν λαβεῖν, ἢ λαβοῦσα τηρῆσαι· *i. e.* It seems to me more possible for a City to stand without Ground, than for a Commonwealth to subsist and continue without the Belief of a *God*; which is indeed the only *firm Foundation* whereupon all *Government* and *Society* depends. For if there be *no* God, what should oblige any to *own* any *Superior*, or *pay* any *Submission*? And if his *Interest* be his only *Obligation* to his *Superiors*, whenever he can mend his *Fortune* by *Rebelling* against them, that very same *Interest* which at present *restrains* him from it, will with equal Force *invite* him to

it;

it; nor will it signify any thing that we are obliged to the contrary by *Oaths* of Fidelity and Allegiance: For if it be our Interest to be faithful to the Government, our own *Prudence* and *Discretion* will oblige us to it, *without* such *Oaths* as well as *with* them; but if it be *not* our Interest, and this be the only Principle that obliges us, no *Oath* or *Engagement* can hold us. So that in this *State* of Things, all the *Security* that Governors can have of their Subjects, is, that they *will not* rebel when they *are not* able; but as soon as they think it *safe*, to be sure they will think it *lawful*; which being once admitted, will *undermine* the very Foundations of Government, and utterly dissolve that regular *Subordination*, by which human Society is *supported*. Whereas admitting that the Laws of our *Prince* are bound upon us, by the Authority of a Sovereign Lord who can render us eternally *happy* or *miserable*, we are obliged to *obey* him by all that we can *hope* or *fear*, and have all the Engagements to *Loyalty* that the *Reflections* on a *happy* or *miserable* Eternity can lay upon us. What a prodigious *Folly* is it therefore for Men to embrace *Atheism* as their *Interest*, which doth thus directly tend to *deprive* us of all the *Comforts* of *Society*, by *involving* us in *eternal Confusions* and *Disorders*? For if once we take away *mutual Trust*, and *Government* from the *World*, *both* which have a necessary *Dependence* on the *Belief* of a God, we break all the *Harmony* of *human Society*, and convert it into a *Commonwealth* of *Cannibals*. And what Man in his *Wits* would ever be fond of an *Opinion*, that proclaims *open War* with Mankind, and is pregnant with Consequents so *fatal* and *destructive* to the World? Can we think it more *advantageous* to us that *Atheism* should be *true*, than that human Society should be *upheld* and *perpetuated*? Or are the *Pleasures* we reap from the *Lusts* which incline us to Atheism, comparably so valuable as the *Benefits* which accrue to us from being *formed* and *united* into regular Corporations? If not how apparently do we engage against our own *Interest*, when we espouse the *Cause* of *Irreligion*?

III. The Atheist concludes against that which is the main *Support* and *Comfort* of *human Life*. For while we are in this *World*, our *best* and *securest* Condition is exposed to a World of *sad* and *uncomfortable* Accidents, which we have neither the *Wisdom* to *foresee*, nor the *Power* to *prevent*: So far are we from being *self-sufficient* as to our worldly *Happiness*, that there are a *thousand* Causes upon which we depend for it, that are not in our *Power* to dispose of; and in a such a State of *Uncertainty*, wherein we are continually bandied to and fro, and made the *Game* of *Inconstant Fortune*, what *Quiet* or *Security* can we enjoy within our selves without believing that there is a God at the Helm, that steadily over-rules all Events that concern us, and *steers* and *directs* them by the invariable *Compass* of his own infinite *Wisdom* and *Goodness*. For considering how *poor* and *indigent* our Nature is, how we are fain to *seek abroad*, and to go a *begging* from door to door for our *Happiness*; how we depend upon *Chance*, and are *secure* of nothing we *possess*, or *desire*, or *hope for*; how prone we are to be *alarmed* with the Prospect of a *sad* Futurity, and to *magnify* distant Evils in our own *Apprehensions*; how apt we are to *aggravate* our Miseries by our Impatience and Despair, and to *pall* our Enjoyments by expecting more from them than their Natures will afford; considering these Things, I say, which Way can we turn ourselves without a God? or where can we repose our *restless Thoughts* but in his *Providence*? Verily, could I be *tempted* to believe that there is *no* God, I should look upon *human Nature* in its present Circumstances as the most *forlorn* and *abandoned* Part of the Creation, and wish that I had had the Luck to be of any *other* Species than that of a *Rational Animal*. For in the *State* I am, I find my self *liable* to a *thousand* Dangers *against* which I have no *Sanctuary*, and under which I have no *Support*, if there be no God to govern the World; and having such a dismal Prospect of Things *before* me, and a busy Mind *within* me that will be continually *working on*, and *aggravating* the Evils of it, what can I do with my self, or how can I enjoy my self without a *God* to *rely* on? Upon the Supposal that he

is, and that he *governs* the World, I can easily *relieve* my self under the most *dismal* Apprehensions; I can *fairly* conclude, and *safely* depend on it, that if I take care, by my Submission to God's *Will*, to make him my *Friend*, he will either *prevent* the Evils I apprehend, or *support* me under them, or *convert* them to my *Good*, either of which is sufficient to set my *Heart at Ease*, and instate me in a *quiet Enjoyment* of my self. But now by *giving up* the Belief of a *God*, I *throw away* all these Considerations, and leave my self utterly *destitute* and *supportless*. For what solid Ground of Support can I have, when I have no Manner of *Security*, either that the Evils I *dread* shall be *prevented*, or that I shall have a proportionable *Strength* to bear them, or that I shall ever reap any *Good* or *Advantage* from them; without which Considerations, every Evil that *threatens* or *befals* me is *pure unmingled* Misery, against which there is no *Fence* or *Cordial* in *Reason* or *Philosophy*. For suppose I should argue with the antient Moralists, that every ill Accident that befals me is *fatal*, as being the Effect of some *necessary Cause* that is without my *Power* or *Disposal*, and therefore 'tis unreasonable for me to *grieve* at it: This will be so far from any way *mollifying* the Anguish of my Mind, that 'twill rather *enrage* and *inflame* it. For that my Calamity is *fatal*, so that it is not in my Power to *avoid* or *remove* it, is rather an *Aggravation* than a *Diminution* of it. Or suppose I should reason as the same Moralists otherwhiles do, Why should I *grieve* at the Evils that befal me, when, alas! my *Grief* will be so far from *lessening* them, that 'twill rather *increase* and *multiply* them, contribute new *Venom* to their *Stings*, and render them more *pungent* and *dolorous*? What a *faint* Cordial would it be to my *oppressed* Mind, to consider that my *Grief* will but *augment* my *Load*? It is some *Ease* to a dejected Soul to vent its Griefs in *Moans* and *Lamentations*, which whilst she seeks to *smother* in a *sullen Silence*, like imprisoned Wind, will breed a *Cholick* in her Bowels? and is it not a sad Thing that I must *deny* my self the *only* Solace of a miserable Man, for Fear of *augmenting* my Misery? Again, Suppose I should *reason* thus with the same Authors, That Afflictions are *indifferent* Things, and in themselves neither *good* nor *evil*, but indifferently *improveable* into *Mischiefs* or *Benefits*; this I confess were a good Argument, supposing that the Affliction came from a *good God*, who can *extract* Good out of all our Evils, and render the *rankest* Poison *Medicinal*; but otherwise you will find 'tis but a *cold* Comfort to call your *Misery* by *another* Name: For, if there be no God to *temper* our Evils, and to *ordain* and *direct* them to *wise* and *good* Ends, we shall find in the *Issue* they will prove *themselves* Evils to us, by what *soft* Name soever we may *call* them. Again, and to name no more, Suppose I should reason thus, as those Masters of Morality do, That to bear *Afflictions* with an unconcerned Mind, is *brave*, and *manly*, and *generous*; that it is an Argument of a *great* and *heroick* Mind, that hath raised it self above the *Reach* of *Misfortunes*: I readily *confess* so it is, supposing a Man hath *good Reason* thus to bear his Afflictions, which is the *Question* in Debate, for then it is the Triumph of *Reason* over *Passion*, and an *illustrious* Instance of a *well-fortified* Mind; but if we have *no* Reason for it, all these glorious Words, *Generous*, *Brave*, &c. are nothing but *empty* Flash, and *mere* Rhodomontado. For, for a Man to be unconcern'd with Evils *without* Reason, is so far from being *generous* and *brave*, that 'tis an Argument of his brutal *Stupidity* and *Fool-hardiness*. But yet, supposing that there is no *God*, *these* are the main Arguments we have to *support* ourselves under any Calamity. But, alas! such *real* Griefs of ours are not to be redress'd with *pretty* Sayings, and *grave* Sentences, which, tho they may look takingly at a *Distance*, will, when we come to *apply* and *experience* them, force us to pronounce as *Job* did of his Friends, *Miserable Comforters are ye all, and Physicians of no Value*. So that were we left *destitute* of *God* and a *Providence*, and of all those *blessed* Supports we derive from *thence*, we were of *all* Creatures the *most* miserable. For in this State of Things we are compassed about with *Miseries* and *Misfortunes*, and which, without God, is our *greatest* Misfortune, we have a thing

called *Reason* within our Breast, which is very *ingenious* in giving *Stings* to our *Miseries*, and *vexing* us with *cutting* Reflections on them, but is not able to *qualify* one Grief, or minister one *Dram* of *solid Comfort* to us.

But when we lift up our Eyes to *God*, there are such *vast* and *innumerable* Comforts flowing down to us from the Consideration of his *Nature*, and *Providence*, as are sufficient not only to *allay* our *Sorrows*, but to *convert* them into *Joys* and *Triumphs*. For in him we behold not only an infinite *Wisdom* that always knows what is best for us, but also an infinite *Goodness* that always *wills* what it knows to be so, and an infinite *Power* that always *does* what it *wills*; and whilst we *see* and *consider* this, there is nothing in the World can happen *amiss* to us; welcome *Pain*, welcome *Pleasure*, welcome *Loss*, welcome *Gain*, welcome *Disgrace*, welcome *Honour*; for if we have but God our *Friend*, we may securely *depend* upon it, that whatever befals us is *best* for us.

Who but a *Mad-man* therefore would ever espouse the Cause of *Atheism*, or make it his Interest to *exclude* God out of the World? Indeed, were he an *envious*, *malicious*, or *tyrannical* Being, that *repined* at the Happiness of his Creatures, and watched all Opportunities to *plague* or *destroy* them, 'twere but reasonable we should endeavour to *quit* our Minds of the *Belief* of him; but to imagine it our *Interest* to believe there is no such Being in the World as a *good* God, that out of the immense *Benignity* of his Nature, *espouses* our Interest, and *takes care* of our Happiness; that *understands* our Wants, and *compassionates* our Sufferings, and is *able* and *willing* to *support* and *relieve* us; that requires nothing of us but what is for our Good, and will infinitely reward us for doing *that* which is *best* for *our selves*; that *connives* at our Follies, and *pities* our Infirmities, and upon our unfeigned *Repentance* is ready to be *reconciled* to us, even when we *wilfully* and *presumptuously* provoke him; to imagine it, I say, our Interest to shake off the *Belief* of such a *blessed* Being as *this*, is the utmost height of *Folly* and *Madness*. For 'twere doubtless, a thousand times more tolerable for Men that the *Sun* should be *pulled down* from the Firmament, and all the Lights of Heaven extinguished, than that the *Belief* of a God should be *banish'd* from the World, the Absence of which would *overspread* Mankind with such a *dismal Night* of Horror and Despair, and Blackness of Darkness, as would render all *wise* and considering Men *weary* of their Beings, and cause them to *wish* a thousand times over, as for the *utmost* Good they could *devise* for themselves, Oh that there were such a Being as a *God* at the *Helm* of the World, that so the Affairs of it might be *steered* by an *infinite Power*, that is always *directed* by an *infinite Wisdom*, and always *bias'd* and *inclined* by an *infinite Goodness*! What then can be more *brutish* or *irrational*, than for the sake of a few base Lusts, that are the *Scandal* of our Nature, the Bane of our *Society*, the *Vexation* of our Lives, and the *Disturbance* of all our Happiness, to banish the *Belief* of a God from our Minds, which is the Foundation of our Hope, and the only *Support* we can rationally *depend* on.

IV. The *Atheist* concludes for that Side of the Question which is infinitely the most *unsafe* and *hazardous*. He who believes there *is* a God, and acts accordingly, runs a very *small* and *inconsiderable* Venture, if in the Issue of Things he should chance to be *mistaken*; he only ventures the *dissatisfying* a few *extravagant* Lusts, the *crossing* some *irregular* Inclinations of his Nature, which if he had *gratified*, would have *vexed* and *tormented* him, and *entangled* his Life with a thousand *ill* Circumstances; he only ventures some *Prayers* and *Tears*, some *Watchings*, and *Strugglings*, and *Contentions* with himself, and perhaps some *Reproaches* and *Persecutions* for Righteousness sake, in *exchange* for which he hath commonly a *healthful*, and a *prosperous*, an *even*, *safe*, and *contented* Life, a *quiet* and a *triumphant* Conscience, and a *joyous* Expectation of a blissful *Eternity* to come, which do out-weigh all the *Incommodities* he ventures, all the *Pains* he undergoes, and all the *Pleasures* of which he debars himself; and if in the *Conclusion*, when he resigns up his *Breath*, it appears that there is neither *God*, nor *Heaven*, nor *Hell*, his Condition will be altogether *as good* as the

the Atheists, with whom he will *sleep* quietly in the *same* Dust, under the same everlasting Insensibility.

But, on the contrary, the Atheist, by *believing* that there is no God, and *acting* accordingly, runs the most *desperate* Hazard in the World. For besides that he *throws away* the *main* Support and Comfort of his Life, and lays himself open to all Contingencies, and *resigns* up the *Satisfaction* of a good Conscience, together with the *Hope* of a blessed Futurity, and all the innumerable *Joys* it abounds with; besides all which, I say, he ventures to be *eternally wretched* and *miserable* in the World to come, and exposes himself *naked* and *defenseless* to the *unquenchable* Wrath of an *everliving God*; in exchange for all which, he hath no other *present* Compensation, but the Pleasures of a *riotous* and *tumultuary* Life, which do always *die away* in the Enjoyment, and are generally *dash'd* and *sophisticated* with a thousand very *sad* and *uncomfortable* Circumstances. And then if, when he concludes this *present* Scene of Life, he should find himself *mistaken* in his Atheistical *Confidence*, and be unexpectedly summoned to the Tribunal of *that* God, whose *Being* and *Authority* he hath so peremptorily *denied* and *affronted*, and from thence be *transmitted* into a *dismal* Eternity, there to *languish out* an everlasting Existence in *remediless* Woes, and *unpitied* Lamentations; how would it *astonish* and *confound* him to find his confident Infidelity *baffled* by such a woful *Experiment*, when instead of being *asleep* in a State of *Silence* and *Insensibility*, which was the thing he *depended* on, he shall find himself *wafted* to a strange Shore, and there *landed* among *Devils* and *miserable Spirits*, in a State of *endless*, *easeless*, and *remediless* Calamity! How *blank* and *forlorn* will the *Fool* look, to find himself thus *fatally* mistaken? and yet, for all *he* knows, *this* may be the Result and Issue of Things. So that 'tis a very *small* Hazard, you see, that *good* Men run, compared with *that* of the *Atheists*; for should they be mistaken, *their* Condition will be *as good* as *his* at the winding up of the Bottom; but if they *should* not, it will be *infinitely better*.

It is storied of a certain Hermit, who being retired from the World, led a very *severe* and *mortify'd* Life, that being one Day met by two Cardinals, who were riding by with a very *pompous* Equipage, was thus accosted by them; Father, why should you thus *mortify* and *macerate* your self, by retiring from the *Glories* and *Pleasures* of this Life? Suppose now that after all your Religious *Severities*, there should be neither a *God*, nor a *future World* to reward you, would it not be *egregious* Folly in you thus to throw away *present* Enjoyments for *future* Nothings? To which the good Man presently return'd this Answer: But, Sirs, suppose there should be a *God*, and a *future World* to *punish* you, would it not be egregious Folly in you, to run such a *desperate* Venture as you do, of being *everlastingly* miserable for the sake of a few *momentary* Honours and Advancements? Upon which, as the Story saith, the Cardinals being *convinced*, went away very *pensive*. And herein, doubtless, the honest Hermit was very much in the right. For were it a *Moot-Point* whether there *be* a God or *no*, one would think it a Matter of such unspeakable Moment, and where the Hazard on each Side is so *infinitely unequal*, there is no Man in his Wits but would choose the safest Side, and make *that* his Rule and Principle to live by. In this therefore the Atheist is justly chargeable with the most desperate *Folly*, that whereas at *least* he might be *safe*, if not *eternally happy*, by *believing* that there *is* a God, and *acting* accordingly, he rather chooses to *venture* being *eternally* miserable, by *believing* there *is* none, and *acting* as if there *were* none. In short, this is the plain State of the Case, if I *believe* that God *is*, and *act* consonantly, I shall be *safe* if he be *not*, and eternally *happy* if he *be*; whereas, if I believe that he is *not*, I am sure to be *miserable* for ever if he *be*, and am only *safe* from being miserable for ever if he be *not*; and this being the Case, I leave any Man to judge which of the *two* is in Prudence more *eligible*, the *Peradventure* of being *happy* for ever, or of being *miserable* for ever, supposing *both* to be *equally probable*. But,

V. The Atheist concludes for the *unsafest* Side of the Question upon the greatest *Uncertainties* in the World. One would think, before a Man assented to a Conclusion, the Consequence of which, if he should be *mistaken*, will be for ever *fatal* to him, he should be so *wise* at least as to *look* before he *leap*, and satisfy himself of the *Grounds* he *concludes* on, and not to give up his *Assent* upon every *doubtful* and *uncertain* Appearance. Now that Part of the Question which the Atheist *assents* to, is of such *mighty* Consequence, as that should it prove *false*, he is lost for ever; and therefore, one would think it concern'd him to be *very sure of his Hand*, and take care that his Assent be *founded* upon very *strong* and *undeniable* Evidence, instead of which he *assents* at a *Venture*, and grounds his *Belief* upon the most *sandy* Foundations. For,

I. He concludes for a *pure Negative*.

II. He concludes for it upon a *bare Possibility*.

III. He concludes for it, against the *best Evidence* that the *contrary* will *admit*.

I. He concludes for a *pure Negative*. All Men are agreed, that 'tis a very *hard* Thing to prove a *Negative*; but to prove a *pure Negative* is *impossible*, unless the *Existence* of the Thing which it denies *implies* an *express Contradiction*. 'Tis true, where a Thing *visibly exists*, so that we can perceive as well how it doth *not exist*, as how it *doth*, we may with as good *Evidence deny* as *affirm*; but as for *pure Negatives*, which deny the very *Existence* of such Things as may *possibly* exist, it is impossible to be *certain* of them without an *infinite* Understanding. For before we can be sure, that what is *not* in our *Understanding* is *not* in *Nature*, we must be sure, that whatsoever *is* in *Nature* is in our *Understanding*; otherwise a thousand Things may *be*, tho we do not *understand* them. As for Instance, unless I were sure that I had the perfect *Map* or *Geography* of such a Country in my Head, it is impossible I should be sure that there is no such *Town*, or *City*, or *Region* belonging thereunto; and so, unless I were sure that the *Cosmography* or *universal Map* of *Nature* were perfectly *delineated* on my *Understanding*, I cannot *positively* affirm, that such or such a Being doth *not* actually exist. So, that, as a great Divine of our own hath well observed upon this very *Argument*, after all that can be *said against* a Thing this will *still* be *true*, that many Things possibly *are* which we know *not* of, and that many Things more *may* be than *are*. For unless our Understanding were *extended* to the whole *Compass* of Nature, there may be, for all we know, ten thousand *Things* in *Nature*, which are not in our *Understanding*. So that concerning *pure Negatives* we can never be *certain*, unless the Things which they deny be absolutely *impossible*, and imply, in the very *Notion* of their *Existence*, a *plain Contradiction*; which cannot be said of the Existence of *God*. For by *God*, we mean nothing but a Being endow'd with all *possible Perfections*; and to say that it is *impossible*, that there should be any such *Being* as is endowed with all the *Perfections* that 'tis *possible* for a *Being* to be endow'd with, is to assert *Possibilities impossible*, which is a Contradiction *in Terms*. Since therefore this *Negative* that there is *no* God, denies that which is *possible* in its Nature, and which implies not the least *Shadow* of Contradiction, it is impossible, supposing it *were* true, for any *finite* Understanding to be *certain* of it. What Man in his Wits then would ever presume to *deny* the Being of a God, and to *stake* his everlasting Fate on it, when he knows before-hand that he cannot be *sure*, that his Denial is *true*, and that if it prove *false* he is lost for ever! Alas! what is this but to *throw Dice* for our Souls, and to *venture* our Salvation on a *wild Uncertainty*.

II. The Atheist concludes for a *pure Negative* upon a *bare Possibility*. One would think, in a Matter of such infinite *Moment*, Men should at least be so *wise* as not to *conclude* without *strong Probabilities*, where they can find no *Certainty* to rely on; but so *desperately* fool-hardy is the Atheist, as to suspend his *Faith*, and with that his *Salvation*, upon the *bare Possibility* that there *may* be *no* God.

God. For when he is urged with those Arguments of God's Being, that are drawn from the *beautiful* Contrivance of the *World*, he hath no other Way to *evade* them, but by endeavouring to demonstrate how by the necessary Laws of *Matter* and *Motion*, Things might possibly be *shuffled* together as they are, without the *Agency* and *Direction* of a God; and yet even in *this* Attempt so many *inextricable* Difficulties present themselves as have puzzled and *confounded* the acutest Wits that were ever engaged in it; and while with all their Art and *Contrivance* they have been framing their *Hypothesis* of the Existence of this World *without* a God, they have been forced not only to *beg* some Principles, but also to *assert* others that upon Examination have been found repugnant to the Nature of Things; and when all is done, if *both* were true, yet are they altogether *insufficient* to solve a *thousand Phænomena* in Nature. So that the utmost that the most *learned* and *inquisitive* Atheist could ever pretend to, was to advance Atheism to a grand *Perhaps*; and by endeavouring to *demonstrate* how Things might *possibly* be as they are *without* a God, to prove that 'tis *possible* there is *none*: And yet when all is done, their most *ingenious Endeavours* are only a *Demonstration* that the most *acute* and *witty* Men may be *mistaken*. For what a *hopeless* kind of Task is it to *shew* how *that may be* the *Effect* of a blind *Chance* or *Necessity*, which hath all the *Characters* of a *wise Design* and *Contrivance* fairly imprinted on it? How is it possible for an *undesigning Chance* to fit *Means* to *Ends*, or *Ends* to *Natures*? Or so to *proportion* Parts to *one another*, as to make a *comely* Symmetry in the *whole*, and this in *ten thousand* Instances, and not fail in *one*? How often, as the above-named Author from *Tully* discourses, might a Man after he hath shaken together a Set of Letters in a Bag, fling them out upon the Ground, before they would fall into an exact *Poem*, or make a good Discourse in Prose? And may not a little *Book* be as easily made by *Chance*, as the great *Volume* of the *World*, in which there is such an *inexhaustible* Treasure of rich *Sense* and *Contrivance*? Or how long might a Man be in sprinkling Colours upon a Canvas with a careless Hand, before they would happen to fall into the exact Picture of a Man? And is a Man easier made by *Chance* than his *Picture*? Why may we not as well conceive the most regular Building in the World to be *framed* by a casual Concourse of *Stone* and *Iron* and *Timber*, as that these *blind* and *rambling* Parts of Matter should chance to place themselves so *orderly* in the World, and to observe such an exact Harmony and *Decorum*, as if they kept Time with the Musical Laws of some Almighty Mind that *composed* their Measures, and regulated their Motions up and down in the Universe.

But granting the Atheist what he so *eagerly* tho *unsuccessfully* contends for, that it is *possible* all this might happen by mere *Chance*, and consequently that there may be *no* God in the World; would any Man in his Wits *found* his Faith upon a *mere Possibility*, when 'twill be as much as his *Soul* is worth, if he should happen to be *mistaken*? It is possible, that should he throw himself from the *Top* of a high Steeple, the *Air* between may be so *condensed* as to *bear* him up and *preserve* him from being *dash'd* in Pieces by his *Fall*; but would you not think the Man stark mad that should *venture* his Neck upon that *Possibility*? And yet it is a far more *desperate Venture* that the Atheist makes by thus hazarding his Soul to *everlasting Destruction*, upon a *bare Possibility* that there may be no God to *destroy* him.

III. The Atheist concludes against the *best Evidence* that the *contrary* will *admit*. For that there is a God, we have as *full Evidence* as the Matter could bear if there *were* one, and to require *more* is *absurd* and *unreasonable*. For let us at present *suppose*, but for Argument-sake, that there *were* such an *infinite Spirit* in the World; a Spirit that were as *wise*, and as *good*, and as *powerful* as he whom we call *God* is supposed to be; supposing, I say, there were such a *Spirit actually* existing, we could not have greater *Evidence* of it than we have *already* that he *actually* exists. For we could not *see* him with our Eyes, because we suppose him to be a *Spirit*; we could not demonstrate his Existence

à priori, or from any Cause, because being the *First Cause* he must be *uncaused* or *Self-originated*. It remains therefore, that the only Demonstration we could give of his Being, is that which we call *à posteriori*, or from such *sensible Effects* as can only be ascribed to the *Power* and *Wisdom* and *Goodness* of such a Being; and of such Effects as *these* we have *infinite* Instances before us. For in sum, we have all this *visible* World about us, whose *changeable* Nature demonstrates it to be the Effect of *some* Superior Cause, and whose unspeakable *Vastness*, *Beauty*, and *Contrivance* argue it to be the Effect of some most *wise* and *good* and *powerful* Cause. For as to the first, whatsoever is *changeable* cannot *self-exist*, but must necessarily proceed from some *superior Cause*; because whatsoever *self-exists* is *necessarily*, and whatsoever is necessarily is *always the same*; that which is *without* any cause, cannot but *be*; and that which is *thus* or *thus* without any Cause, cannot but be *so* or *so* for ever. And consequently, if the World were *of it self* without any Cause, it would not only *be* necessarily, but also *be such* as *it is* necessarily and unchangeably; but contrariwise we plainly perceive that it runs a *perpetual* Course of *Change* and *Alteration*, that its Parts are continually *altering* their Figure, and *shifting* their Places with one another, whereas if this *Part* were of it self necessarily, as it must be if the *Whole* be so, it would necessarily be *where* it is and *what* it is eternally.

And since the *Mutability* of this World argues it to be the Effect of some *superior Cause*, I would fain know whether considering the *Vastness*, and *Beauty*, and *Contrivance* of it, it be not most reasonable to attribute it to such an *all-good*, *all-wise*, and *almighty* Cause as we suppose *God* to be. For what less than an *infinite Power* can bear a due Proportion to such a vast and *immense* World? Should you enter into a *vast* and *magnificent* Palace, and find no Creature in it but a company of *Mice* or *Weasels*, could you possibly believe that these *impotent* Vermin *built* it? And yet the Building of the most royal Palace doth not so much *exceed* the Power of these *weak* Animals, as the Building of *this* World doth the Power of *any* Cause but a *God*. But then if we consider the infinite *Number* of Beings in the World that are *capable* of Happiness, and the vast Provisions that are made to *entertain* them according to their *several* Capacities, we cannot but thence conclude, that the *Power* which made them was *acted* by an *infinite Goodness*. Lastly, if we consider the *rare* and *admirable* Contrivance of the several *Parts* of the World; how perfect each one is in *its Kind*, how exactly *fitted* to each other, and what a lovely *Symmetry* and *Proportion* they all make in the *Whole*; how can we otherwise imagine, but that That *Power* and *Goodness* which caused it was directed by an *infinite Wisdom*? So that the World is *such* an Effect as openly *proclaims* its Cause to be a God, and if *this* Evidence of God's Existence will not *convince* Men, they are *impregnably* fortified against *all* Conviction; and if God should carry them into those *infinite Spaces* that are *beyond* the Limits of this World, and there command a *New* One into Being, while *they* stood *looking on*, and *saw* it springing out of nothing, they might with as good Reason conclude *that* World to be nothing but a *fortuitous* Concourse of *insensible* Parts of Matter, as they now do that *this* is so. So that, in fine, he that *denies* God after all these *Demonstrations* which he hath given of himself, is out of the *reach* of Argument, and if he *pursue* his own *Principles*, can *never* be convinced by any *possible* Reasons. And what a desperate Folly is it for Men to embrace a Belief, which, should they be *mistaken*, draws after it *everlasting Ruin*, when they have all the Reasons to the *contrary* that the Matter is *capable* of? What is this but to *shut* their *Eyes*, and cast themselves *blindfold* on their own *Destruction*, and to resolve to *wink hard*, and believe *against* all possible Reason, that so they may ruin themselves without any *Interruption*?

VI. And lastly, The Atheist plainly *contradicts* himself in his *own Conclusion*. For by denying that God is, he necessarily denies the *Possibility* of his Being. For if he be *not*, it is impossible he should *ever* be; because Eternity of Be-

ing is included in the *Notion* of him. For when we speak of *God*, we mean by him a Being that is *before* all Causes, and the *Cause* of all Causes; and that therefore *oweth* not his Being to any *prior* Cause but doth *necessarily*, *independently*, and *eternally* exist. So that if he be not *now*, he cannot be at *all*, because he must *begin* to be, which is contradictory to the very essential *Notion* and *Idea* of him. For if he should ever *begin* to be, he cannot be *Eternal*; and if he be not *Eternal*, he cannot be God. So that to say God is *not*, is by necessary Consequence to say he *cannot* be at all; and yet by a *God*, we mean at the same time *a Being that is endowed with all the possible Perfections that a Being is capable of.* Wherefore as by saying that God is *not*, we do by Consequence assert that it is *impossible* he should *ever* be; so by asserting that it is *impossible* he should *ever* be, we do in effect assert this gross Contradiction, That it is impossible *such* a Being should ever *be*, as includes all the *Perfections* that are *possible* to a Being. Thus in the same Breath we pronounce that God *can* and *cannot* be, that 'tis *possible* he *is*, and yet *impossible* he *should* ever *be*. For by saying that he is a Being endowed with all the *possible* Perfections of Being, we expresly affirm that it is possible he *may* be; but by saying that there is *no* such Being *actually* existing, we do as expresly assert that it is impossible he should ever be. He therefore who asserts that God is not, doth by necessary Consequence assert this *express* Contradiction, *that it is impossible there should ever be a Being as perfect as it is possible.* And when, if there *be* a God, Mens eternal Fate depends but upon *believing* that he *is*, and *acting* accordingly, what a monstrous Folly is it for Men to *contradict* themselves to *deny* him? What is this but to *stake* their Souls upon it, that the very *first Principle* of Reasoning is *false*, and put their Fate upon this *desperate* Issue, that unless *both* Parts of a *Contradiction* prove *true*, they must *inevitably* perish for ever?

And now having shewn you from what *malignant* Causes Atheism springs, and how desperately *foolish* and *unreasonable* it is in self, let us all endeavour, by the *serious* Consideration of what hath been said, to *fortify* our Minds against it. And since this Proposition, That God *is*, is the prime Foundation of *all* Religion, it concerns us all to use our utmost Diligence to *establish* our Minds in the *firm* and *stedfast* Belief of it; and *this* we cannot fail to *do*, if we heartily *endeavour* it. For the Arguments of God's Being do shine all round about us with such a *clear* and *convincing* Light, that we need do no more, than just *open* our Eyes to see it, and *dispel* those mischievous Causes from our *Wills*, that *hide* and *obscure* it from our *Understandings*. And when once we have thorowly settled the *Belief* of God's Being in our *Minds*, it will mightily *influence* all our Powers of *Action*; it will *invite* our Hope, and *alarm* our Fear, and *address* to every Passion in us that is capable of *Persuasion*, and be an *ever-living* Spring of Religion within us. For God is an Object so infinitely *great* in *himself*, and of such infinite *Moment* and *Concernment* to *us*, that 'tis next to *impossible* we should *firmly* believe that he *is*, without being *vigorously* impress'd with *religious* Affections upon the Consideration of his *Being*.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Necessity of acknowledging the Divine Providence, *to oblige us to be* truly *Religious.*

THE main *Influence* which the *Belief* of a God hath upon the Minds of Men, proceeds immediately from the *Belief* of his *Providence*, without *which* we are no way *concerned* or *interested* in him. For a *God* without a *Providence* is a *solitary* kind of Being that lives *alone* from the World, altogether *retired* within himself, and never *looks abroad*, or any ways *intermeddles* with any thing *without*: and what have *we* to do with a *Being* that hath nothing to do with *us* or our *Affairs*, but lives *apart* from us in some *inaccessible* Retirement, where neither *we* can go to *him*, nor *he* come to *us*? So that it is by his *Providence* that all *Correspondence* and *Intercourse* between God and his Creatures is *maintained*; which being taken away, *he* is as nothing to *us*, and *we* are as nothing to *him*. For what doth it signify to *us* that there is a certain *excellent* Being called *God*, sitting on the Top of the Heavens with his Arms *folded* in his Bosom, and who doth nothing there but *enjoy* himself in a *quiet* Contemplation of his own Perfections, without regarding any thing *without* him, or doing either *good* or *hurt* to the World? Such a God is nothing but a great *Cypher* in the World, that only makes a *glorious* Flourish, but is as *insignificant* as no *God* at all. For to what Purpose should we *pray* to a God that is not at leisure to *hear* us, or *hope* in a God that is not concerned to *help* us? What should move us to *love* a God that bestows no *Good*, or to *fear* a God that inflicts no *Evil*, or to *obey* a God that hath no Regard of our *Actions*? Why should we *thank* him, if we receive nothing from him? For what should we *praise* him, if he be no ways *beneficial* to the World? And wherein should we *imitate* him if he *sits* still and doth *nothing*, and exercises neither *Wisdom*, nor *Goodness*, nor *Justice*, nor *Mercy* towards any thing without him? All which *Perfections* of the Deity without a *Providence* are utterly *void* and *useless*. For his *Providence* is the great *Sphere* of *Activity* wherein he *exercises* and *displays* his Perfections, wherein his Power executes the Contrivances of his Wisdom, and his Wisdom *contrives* the Methods of his Goodness; so that without his *Providence* all his Perfections will signify *nothing*. For what doth that Wisdom signify that *contrives* nothing? Or that Power which *doth* nothing? Or that *Goodness* that is *good for* nothing? Or that Justice which *distributes* nothing? And yet just such *Cyphers* are all the Perfections of God, supposing there is no *Providence* wherein to *employ* and *exercise* them. And if once we *vacate* and *extinguish* these Perfections of God, which are the Graces which render him so *sublime* and *adorable*, what Reason can move us to *adore* and *worship* him? For why should we concern our *selves* with a God who concerns *himself* with no Body, and that either hath neither *Power*, nor *Wisdom*, nor *Goodness*, or, which is the same to us, makes no *Use* of them? So that the *Denial* of God's *Providence*, you see, directly cuts in sunder all the *Ties* of Religion, by rendring him an *insignificant* Being to the World.

In the Prosecution of this Argument, I shall shew, First, *What* of the *Divine Providence* it is that is *necessary* to be *believed*, in order to our being *truly Religious*. Secondly, What *Evidence* there is to *create* in us *this* Belief. Thirdly, The *Insufficiency* and Unreasonableness of the common Pretences to *Infidelity* in this Matter.

SECT. I.

What is it we are to believe of the Divine Providence.

IN General, it is not *sufficient* that we believe *this* or *that* Part or Branch of it, but we must acknowledge the *Whole*; every *Part*, whereof the *Whole* consists, being *pregnant* with very *powerful* Obligations to Religion. Now the *Whole* of *Providence* consists in God's continual *Conservation*, *Possession*, *Inspection*, and *Disposal* of all Things, and *Government* of the Rational World. So that the *Whole* of it includes these Five Parts or Branches.

I. God's continual *Conservation* of all things.

II. His continual *Possession* of all things.

III. His continual *Inspection* of all things.

IV. His continual *Ordering* and *Disposal* of all things.

V. His continual *Government* of the Rational World. All which, as I shall shew, are highly *necessary* to be *believed* in order to our being *truly Religious*.

I. To oblige us to be *truly Religious*, it is necessary we should believe that God continually *upholds* and *conserves* all things. That he alone is the great *Atlas*, on whose Almighty Shoulders the whole Frame of things *depends*. For tho the Works of *human Art* do often stand many Ages after the Workman's Hand is *withdrawn* from 'em, yet the Reason is because there is *Something* between *them* and *Nothing*, *viz*. the *pre-existing Matter* of which they are formed; whereas the Works of God being all produced out of *Nothing*, have nothing between them, but that *Creative Power* which produced them. And therefore as *Man*'s Works would necessarily perish, were that *pre-existing Matter* taken away, which stands between *them* and Nothing, so *God*'s Works would necessarily resolve into Nothing, should that *creative Power* be withdrawn which stands between them and Nothing. In short, *pre-existing Matter* is the Basis of *our* Works, and *creative Power* of God's; and therefore as *our* Works must cease to be, were their *pre-existing Matter* withdrawn, so *God*'s Works must cease to be, were his *creative Power* withdrawn. So that 'tis the same Almighty Power which raised the World out of Nothing that keeps it from *sinking into* Nothing; and that it *is* this Moment is as much the Effect of divine Power, as that it *was* that Moment when it was first created. For the World was no more able to give it self the *second* Moment of Being than it was the *first*, nor the *third* than the *second*, and so on thro' all the *past* and *future* Moments of its Being. For *one* Moment of Being is as much as *another*, and therefore to give a *second* requires the same Power as to give a *first*; and if so, then each *succeeding* Moment of the World's *Duration* and *Continuance* must be derived from the Cause of the *first* Moment of its *Being*. So that the *Creation* and *Conservation* of the World, is only the *same* Act *continuing* and *flowing on* (like a *Line* from a Mathematical *Point*) from the *first* Instant of its *Being* to the *last* Period of its *Duration*: And so the Scripture represents it, *Nehemiah* 9. 6. *Thou, even thou art Lord alone*; *thou hast made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens with all their Hosts, the Earth and all things that are therein, and thou preservest them all*; and Acts 17. 25, 28. *He giveth to all Life and Breath and all things*; *in him we live, and move, and have our Being*; and *Heb*. 1. 3. he is said to *uphold all things by the Word of his Power*.

Which is a Truth of that vast *Importance* to Religion, that it is hardly conceivable how it can *subsist* without it. For while we look on our selves as Beings that are *independent* from God, that do live, and breathe, and subsist of *our selves*, without any new *Supplies* of being from *him*, why should we *serve* and *worship* him? What Reason have we to *trust* in a Being from whom we expect no *Support*? Or to render *Homage* to a Being on whom we have no *Dependence*? So that by *disbelieving* this Part of the *Divine Providence*, we do in effect cut off all *Intercourse* between God and ourselves, and lay an *Imbargo* on Religion. For if *we* depend *not* on him, what have *we* to *do with* him? And if we *owe* not our *Lives* and *Beings* to his *Power*, what Right hath he to *exact* our *Obedience*? But while

while we look upon our ſelves as Beings that *hang* upon him, and *derive* every Breath and Moment of our Beings from him, ſo that ſhould he *withdraw* from us that Almighty Arm that *ſuſtains* us, and leave us to *ſubſiſt* of *ourſelves*, we muſt preſently *drop* into nothing, how can we forbear, without infinite *Stupidity* and *Ingratitude*, to devote *our ſelves* and all our *Powers* and *Faculties* to his Service? For what a *ſtupid* Wretch ſhould I be, ſhould I not ſtudy to pleaſe him upon *whom* I know my *Life* and *Being* depends, and *who* merely by *withdrawing* his Hand from underneath me, can let me ſink into nothing when he pleaſes? And what an *ungrateful* Wretch ſhould I be, ſhould I refuſe to *honour*, *worſhip*, and *obey* him, from *whom* I draw *every* Breath I breathe, and derive *new* Life and Being every Moment?

II. It is alſo neceſſary *we* ſhould believe that God *poſſeſſes* all Things; that he hath not *given away* this World from himſelf and caſt it out of his own *Diſpoſal* as a common *Scramble* among Men; but that he hath *reſerved* to himſelf an *abſolute*, *unalienable* and *independent* Propriety in all that we *enjoy* and *poſſeſs*. For all things *owe* their Being to *him*, as he is the *Creator* and *Upholder* of them; and therefore whatſoever *is* muſt neceſſarily be *his*, becauſe it is by his *Power* and *Providence*. And if *we*, who act by the *Power* of *God*, and can do nothing *without* him, may claim a Right to the Effects of our *Invention* and *Induſtry*, how much more may God who *contrived* and *produced* all things by his own *independent* Wiſdom and Power? For *our* Wiſdom and Power being *God*'s he hath a *Sovereign Right* to all the *Effects* of them; but his *Wiſdom* and *Power* are abſolutely his *own*, without Dependence on any *ſuperior Cauſe*; and therefore whatſoever are the Effects of *them* muſt neceſſarily be *his* by a moſt *abſolute* and *independent* Propriety. And accordingly he is ſtiled *the Poſſeſſor of Heaven and Earth*, Gen. 14. 19. And *Moſes* tells his People, *Behold the Heaven and the Heaven of Heavens is the Lord's, the Earth alſo and all that is therein*, Deut 10. 14. and *the Earth* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *is the Lord's, and the fulneſs thereof, the World and they that dwell therein; for he hath founded it upon the Sea, and prepared it upon the Floods*, Pſal. 24. 1. and 50. 12. *And the Heavens* (ſaith he again) *are thine, the Earth alſo is thine; as for the World and the fulneſs thereof thou haſt founded them*, Pſ. 89. 11.

God therefore being the *Supreme Proprietor* of the World, there is nothing can be juſtly ours but by *his* Will and Grant; and nothing can be ours by *his Will*, but what is *honeſtly* and *juſtly* ours. So that for us to *ſeize* upon any Part of the World by *Fraud*, or *Violence*, or *Oppreſſion*, is to *treſpaſs* upon God, and invade his Property, and to *tear* his *World* from him againſt his Will. Thus whatſoever *we* poſſeſs by Wrong, *we* poſſeſs as *Robbers* and *Invaders* of God, and whatſoever *we* enjoy by *Right*, *we* enjoy as *Tenants* to the great *Landlord* of the World; and without *owning* and *acknowledging* this, we cannot be *truly Religious*. For if the *World* be not *his*, Why ſhould *we pray* to him for what *we want* of it, or *praiſe* him for what *we enjoy*? Why ſhould *we* patiently *ſubmit* to his *Diſpoſal*, when he *deprives* us of what *we have*, or thankfully *acknowledge* his *Goodneſs*, when he *ſupplies* us with what *we need*? Why ſhould *we* imploy our *Poſſeſſions* in his *Service*, or think our ſelves obliged to *return* him any Part of them in *pious* or *charitable* Works? In a Word, Why ſhould *we* be *contented* with a *ſmall Share*, and abide by that *unequal Diviſion* of things that is made in the World, and not endeavour to *increaſe* our *own* poor Heap, by pilfering from *other* Mens that are ten times bigger than ours? Whence are theſe *Obligations* but from this *Suppoſal*, that God is the *Supreme Proprietor* and *Poſſeſſor* of all things; which being denied, there remains no *ſolid* Foundation of Reaſon for any of theſe *great* and *neceſſary* Duties of *Religion*.

III. To oblige us to be truly *religious*, it is alſo neceſſary *we* ſhould *believe* that *God* is *preſent* with and *inſpects* all things, that his divine Subſtance is *diffuſed* thro' and *circumfuſed* about all things, ſo as to *penetrate* them *within* as an univerſal *Soul*, and *contain* them *without* as an univerſal *Place*. For ſo the Jewiſh Doctors are wont to call God *Hamokom*, i. e. the *Place* or *Continent* of all things; becauſe all things are *encompaſſed* by him, and do live and move *within* his infinite Boſom.

For

For ſo in Scripture the divine Subſtance is deſcribed, as ſpreading itſelf *thro'* and *around* the World, even to the utmoſt *Poſſibility* of *Extenſion*. *Whither* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *ſhall I go from thy Spirit, or whither ſhall I flee from thy Preſence? if I aſcend up into Heaven, thou art there; if I make my Bed in Hell, behold thou art there; if I take the Wings of the Morning, and dwell in the uttermoſt parts of the Sea, even there ſhall thy Hand lead me, and thy right hand ſhall hold me*, Pſ. 139. 7, 8, 9. 10. *And behold (ſaith* Solomon) *the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee*, 1 Kings 8. 27. yea, *do not I fill Heaven and Earth, ſaith the Lord himſelf*, Jer. 23. 24.

Now tho God's *Omnipreſence* be *ſtrictly* an Attribute of his *Eſſence*, and not a part of his *Providence*; yet 'tis *ſuch* an Attribute as *includes* his univerſal *Providence*, and without ſuppoſing of which, an univerſal Providence can *hardly* be conceived. For if he *co-exiſts* and be *preſent with* all things, he muſt be ſuppoſed to *operate* upon them; becauſe where-ever *he* is, his infinite Wiſdom and Power and Goodneſs are; which in their own Nature are ſuch *active* Perfections as cannot be preſent, where ſuch a World of things are to be done, and *ſit ſtill* and *do nothing*. For how can we conceive that infinite *Wiſdom* ſhould be preſent where a World of things are to be *ordered*, and yet *order* nothing? That infinite *Power* ſhould be preſent where a World of things are to be *done*, and yet *do* nothing? Or that infinite *Goodneſs* ſhould be preſent where a World of *good* is to be done, and do *no good* at all? Such an *idle, reſtive* Preſence as this, is utterly inconſiſtent with ſuch *active* Perfections. So that the *Omnipreſence* of an infinite *Power*, and *Wiſdom*, and *Goodneſs*, neceſſarily ſuppoſes an *univerſal Providence*, and *without* ſuch an Omnipreſence an univerſal Providence can hardly be conceiv'd. For how can God be preſent by any *Power* or *Virtue* or *Efficacy* of his Nature, in any Place from whence the *Real Subſtance* of his *Divinity* is excluded? How can he *operate* by his own immediate *Efficiency* where he is not? Or extend his *divine Power* and *Wiſdom* and *Goodneſs* over all things, except his *divine Subſtance*, in which theſe Attributes *are*, be *co-extended* with them? Every *Agent* muſt be *where* it acts, becauſe it *acts* from its *Being*, and it is as poſſible for that which *is not* to *operate*, as for that which *is* to *operate* where it *is not*; and hence *Socrates* being asked, *how* it was poſſible for *one* God to order *all* the Affairs of the World? returns this Anſwer, Τοσῦτον καὶ τοιῦτόν ἐστι τὸ θεῖον, ὥσθ' ἅμα ἅπαντα ὁρᾷν καὶ πάντα ἀκούειν, καὶ πανταχοῦ παρεῖναι, καὶ ἅμα πάντων ἐπιμελεῖσθαι· i. e. *God is ſo* great *and* vaſt *a Being, as that he* hears *and* ſees *all things* together, *and is preſent* every where, *and takes care of* all things *at the* ſame time. Thus God's *Omnipreſence*, you ſee, doth *ſo* include his *univerſal Providence*, that *with* it 'tis *neceſſary*, and *without* it *inconceivable*.

And then from his *Preſence with* all things, neceſſarily follows his *Inſpection of* all things; becauſe where-ever *he is*, his *infinite Knowledge is*, which is *inſeparable* from his Being; and where-ever his *infinite Knowledge is*, it muſt neceſſarily have a *thorow* Proſpect of all things round about him, ſo that nothing can be *concealed* from its *Inſpection*. For ſo the Scripture aſſures us, that *the Eyes of the Lord run to and fro thro'out the whole Earth*, 2 Chron. 16. 9. and that *the Eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good*, Prov. 15. 3. and in a Word, that *all things are open and naked to the Eyes of him with whom we have to do*, Heb. 4. 13.

Both which are Truths of *vaſt* Importance to *Religion*. For while Men look upon God as a Being that *dwells* at a *great Diſtance* from them, they will be ready enough to conclude *procul à Jove, procul à Fulmine*, that being *far off* from him, they are out of his *Reach*, and beyond the *Danger* of his *Thunderbolts*; and that he is too far *removed* from them, either to *ſuccour* them when they *want* his *Aid*, or to *puniſh* them when they *deſerve* his *Diſpleaſure*; which muſt needs extinguiſh both their *Hope* and *Fear*, which are the Maſter-Springs of their Religion. And tho we ſhould believe him to be *preſent* with us, yet unleſs we alſo believe that he hath a *full Inſpection* into all our *Actions* and *Affairs*, we ſhall have no Regard to him. For, if he *ſees* not into our Affairs, how can he *ſuccour* and *relieve* us? And if he cannot relieve us, to what end ſhould *we hope* in him, *depend* upon him, or *pray* to him? And unleſs he hath a *perfect* Inſight into all our Actions,

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how ſhould he *reward* or *puniſh* us; and if he cannot *reward* us, what ſhould *encourage* us, if he cannot *puniſh*, what ſhould *terrify* us to do our Duty to him? But if we look upon him as a Being that is *always with us*, and *where-ever* we are *ſurrounds* us with his boundleſs Preſence, that *includes* and *penetrates* every Part of our Subſtance, *ſees* into our *inmoſt* Thoughts and Purpoſes, and *ranſacks* every *Corner* of our Souls with his *all-ſeeing Eye*, and hath a *thorow* and *perfect* Proſpect of all our *Affairs* and *Concerns*, we cannot without infinite *Force* to our *Reaſon*, forbear *fearing* and *reverencing*, *ſerving* and *adoring* him.

IV. To faſten the Obligations of Religion upon us, it is alſo neceſſary that *we believe* that God continually *orders* and *diſpoſes* of all things; that he is the *Spring* of all the Motions of this great *Machine* of the World, that ſets every *Wheel* and *Cauſe* going, and by his all-commanding Influence, *maintains*, *directs*, and *over-rules* their Motions; and that there is nothing happens in the World, whether by *Nature*, or *Chance*, or *Deſign*, but by his *Ordination* or *Diſpoſal*; that even thoſe *natural Cauſes* which are neceſſarily *determined* to ſuch *particular* Courſes and Effects are *influenced* and *conducted* by him, and that whenſoever they *ſtray* from their Courſes, *ſuſpend* or *precipitate* their Motions, or move *counter* to their *natural* Tendencies, it is by his *Order* and *Direction*; that 'tis he who *drives* and *guides* the heavenly Bodies, *impreſſes* the Degrees, and *chalks out* the Paths of their Motions, and by his *own* Almighty Hand *turns round* thoſe ſtupendous Wheels in a perpetual Revolution. For ſo the Scripture tells us, that *he makes his Sun to ſhine upon the good and bad*, Matth. 5. 45. that it is at his *Beck* and *Command*, that thoſe vaſt Bodies of Light *exhale* the Vapours of the Earth and Sea, and *diſſolve* them down again in *Hail*, and *Rain*, and *Snow*. For ſo we are told, that 'tis he *who covers the Heavens with Clouds, and prepares the Rain for the Earth; that ſends forth his Commandment unto the Earth; and giveth Snow like Wool, and ſcattereth the Hoar Froſt like Aſhes, and caſteth forth his Ice like Morſels, and ſendeth forth his Word and melteth them, and cauſes the Wind to blow and the Waters flow*, Pſal. 147. 8, 15, 16, 17, 18. that *the Fire, and Hail, and Snow, and Vapours, and ſtormy Winds do fulfil his Word*, Pſal. 148. 8. And in a Word, that 'tis by his *Order* and *Influence*, that the Earth ſends up its *Sap* into the *Seeds* and *Roots* of Herbs, and Corn, and Plants, and cauſes them to *ſpring* and *grow*, and that all Animals do *propagate* their Kind, and ſtill *repleniſh* the Store-houſes of Nature; for ſo we are told, that *he clothes the Graſs of the Field, and arrays the Lilies in all their Glory*, Matt. 6. 28, 29, 30. and that *he cauſes the Graſs to grow for the Cattel, and Herb for the uſe of Man, that he may bring forth Food out of the Earth*, Pſal. 104. 14.

And then, as for *fortuitous* and *caſual* Events, which depend upon *accidental* and *irregular* Cauſes, as a Man's being *hit* with an Arrow let fly *at random*, or *brained* with a Stone falling from the Top of an Houſe, we muſt believe that they are all *ordered*, *directed*, and *over-ruled* by God; ſo as that to *him* there is nothing *caſual* or *contingent*; and tho there are many things happen, of which there was no *Neceſſity* in their *immediate Cauſes*, yet do they as *neceſſarily* depend upon the *Will* and *Power* of the *firſt Cauſe* of all, as the *Riſing* and *Setting* of the Sun, and *Ebbing* and *Flowing* of the Sea. So, that how *fortuitous* ſoever theſe things may be, in reſpect of the *Deſign* and natural *Tendency* of *ſecond Cauſes*, yet none of them ever happen beſides the *Purpoſe* and *Intention* of God, who *foreſees* and *deſigns* them before they come to paſs, and *directs* and *levels* them to his own moſt *wiſe* and *holy* Ends and Purpoſes. For ſo the Arrow which the Soldier let fly *at Random* was levelled by God at *Ahab*'s Breaſt, ſo that his Death was *Chance* in reſpect of the *Soldier* who ſhot the *Arrow*, but *Deſign* in *God* who *directed* it; and accordingly, *Prov.* 16. 33. we are told, *that the Lot is caſt into the Lap, but the whole diſpoſing thereof is of the Lord.* And ſo in the Caſe of *Chance-Medley*, when a Man *accidentally* kills another without any *Deſign* or *Intention*, tho it be mere *Accident* in *him*, 'tis *Counſel* and *Deſign* in *God*, who, as the Scripture expreſſes it, *delivers the Man* he ſlays *into his Hand*, Exod. 21. 13.

And then laſtly, As for thoſe Events which happen by the *Deſign* of *free* and *rational* Agents, it is neceſſary we ſhould believe that they are *all over-ruled* by

God too; that whatever befals us in this World, whether it be by the *good* or *ill* Design of Men or Angels, is for *good* and *just* and *holy* Ends, either *permitted* or *determined* by the sovereign Disposer of all *Events*: So that without his *wise* Permission or Determination, neither *Angels*, *Men*, nor *Devils*, can do us either *good* or *hurt*: that every *good* thing we receive from *them*, only passes to us thro' *their* Hands from *God*, and that they are only the *Channels* and *Conveyances* of the overflowing Streams of his infinite Bounty; and that whenever we suffer any *ill* from them, *they* are but the *Rods* in *God's Hand*, wherewith he *chastens* and *corrects* us; that he hath the *over-ruling Disposal* of all the Ills which they *inflict* upon us, and can render their *Stings* a sovereign *Balm*, and their *rankest* Poison *Medicinal* to us; so that their *Malice* being in *God's Disposal*, can effect nothing but what *he* will have it; and if it doth us *hurt*, 'tis his *Executioner*, but, if he pleases it shall do us *good*, and like *Leeches* applied by a skilful Physician, *draw* away our *Disease* while it is *sucking* our *Blood*. For so God made the *Malice* of *Joseph's* Brethren the Means of his *Advancement* in *Egypt*; and by the *Covetousness* of *Judas*, and *Cruelty* of the *Jews*, advanced the holy Jesus to his own *Right-hand*, and *executed* his Purpose to *redeem* Mankind. Thus God *over-rules* the Actions of Men, and when he pleases *directs* them quite *contrary* to their Intentions; for the *Way of Man*, saith the Prophet, *is not in himself*, *it is not in Man that w*[illegible] *to direct his Steps*, Jer. 10. 23. It is the Man that *walks* and *acts*, but it is God alone that *leads* his Way, and *directs* his Actions to what End he pleases.

All which it is *necessary* we should *believe* in order to our being *truly* Religious. For while we look upon *God* as a *Foreigner* to the World, that hath altogether *retired* himself from the *Affairs* of it, and *abandoned* it to the Disposal of blind *Chance*, or *Necessity*, he must stand for a *Cypher* in our *Esteem*, and signify no more to us than the *Emperor* of the *World in the Moon*, who, for all we know, may be a *glorious* and *puissant* Prince, but is so far removed from *us* and our *Affairs*, that he can do us neither *good* nor *hurt*. And if God intermeddle not with those *Goods* and *Evils* which happen here below, what doth he signify to *us* who live *apart* from him in another *World*, from which he is wholly *retired* and *withdrawn*? But if we *firmly* believe that there is nothing *befals* us, whether it be in the Course of *Nature*, or by *Chance*, or *Design*, but by his *Order* and *Direction*, we must lay aside our *Reason* and *Humanity*, if for every *Good* we *want*, or do *receive*, we do not apply our selves to him with *humble* and *submissive*, *thankful* and *ingenuous Minds*; and if under every *Evil* that we *feel* or *fear*, we do not *resign* up our *Wills* and *lift* up our *Eyes* to him, as to the sole *Arbitrator* of our *Fate*. For *where* should we *pay* our *Thanks*, or *whence* should we *expect* our *Supplies* and *Deliverances*, but to him who is the *Fountain* of all *Good*, and *from* him who is the *supreme Moderator* of all *Events*? Who is there in *Heaven* or *Earth* whom we are so much *concerned* to *please*, and so much *obliged* to *acknowledge* and *submit* to, so much *engaged* to *trust* to and *rely* on, as him who hath all our *Fortunes* in his *Hands*, and the absolute *Disposal* of *every thing* in which we *are* or *may* or *can* be any way *interested* or *concerned*? So that the *Belief* of God's over-ruling *Providence* hath every *Link* of our *Duty* fastened to it in a *strong* and *rational* Concatenation, and if it be *loosen'd* from this Principle, the whole *Chain* must necessarily fall *in sunder*.

V. And lastly, To *oblige* us to be *truly religious*, it is also necessary we should *believe* that God is the *supreme Governor* of the *rational World*; which is a *distinct* Branch of Providence from the former. For *all* things whatsoever are subject to God's *Order* and *Disposal*, but in *Strictness* of Speech 'tis only *rational Beings* that are subject to his *Government*. For Government supposes *Laws*, and Laws *Rewards* and *Punishments*, of which *rational Beings* alone are *capable*, they alone having the Power to *deliberate*, and upon Deliberation to *choose* what is *good*, and *refuse* what is *Evil*, without which no Being can *deserve* either to be *rewarded* or *punished*. So that the *Government* of God in Strictness of Speech, respects only the *rational World* consisting of *Angels* and *Men*.

As for the *Government* of *Angels*, 'tis impossible we should understand any more of it than what God hath *revealed*, because tho *they* converse with *us* and our *Affairs*, yet *we* do not converse with *them*; our *Spiritual Nature*, by which we are near *allied* to them, being *shut up* in *Matter*, which like a *Wall* of *Partition*, divides us from them, and *hinders* us from *looking over* into their World, and from *seeing* their *Nature* and *Operations*, and *surveying* their *Polity* and *Government*. Indeed, *so far* as we understand their *Natures*, we may easily understand the *Laws* by which God *governs* them; because we know God's *Laws* are always adapted to the *Nature* of *things*; and consequently, since we know that they are *rational* Creatures, we may conclude from thence, that whatsoever is *fit* and *decorous* for *rational* Creatures, as such, they stand obliged to by the *Law* of their *Natures*. But since there are *particular Powers* and *Properties* in their *Natures* which we understand *not*, 'tis impossible we should understand all the *particular* Laws by which they are *governed*. Only thus much in general we *know*, that the whole *Order* of *Angelical Beings* were from the first *moment* of their *Creation* subjected to *Laws* fitted to their *Nature*; by which *natural Laws* they stood *obliged* to *obey* their *Creator* in all his *positive* Commands and Institutions; and that *these* Laws whatsoever they were, both *natural* and *positive*, were established in *Rewards* and *Punishments*, by which if they continu'd *obedient*, they were to continue for ever in their most *blissful Ranks* and *Stations*; but if they *rebelled*, were immediately to be banished thence into everlasting *Wretchedness* and *Misery*; that a *certain Order* of these *Angelical Beings*, excited either by their *Pride*, or *Envy*, or *sensual Affections*, did under their Head or Chieftain *revolt* from *God* by *transgressing* some *natural* or *positive* Law, for which they were *expell'd* the *high* Territories of *Happiness*, and *driven* into these *lower* Parts of the World, where under the Prince of their Rebellion they have ever since *waged War* against *God* and *Man*; that in this State of War they are under the *Restraint* of God's *Almighty* Power, who sets *Bounds* to *their Power* and *Malice* which it *cannot* pass, and *determines* it to what *Ends* and *Purposes* he pleases; employing it sometimes to *try* and *chasten* good Men, sometimes to *execute* his Wrath upon the *Children* of *Disobedience*, and sometimes again letting it *loose* merely to *display* his own Almighty *Power* in its *Defeat* and *Overthrow*; in which State they are reserved as *Prisoners at large* to the *Judgment* of the *great* Day; whereby together with *wicked Men* they shall be *sentenced* and *confined* to everlasting *Flames* and *Darkness*; that the *good Angels*, in *Reward* of their *constant* Obedience are *continu'd* and *fixed* in a most *blissful* Condition, in which they enjoy the *constant* Smiles of God, and the *unspeakable* Pleasure of being *entirely resign'd* to his Will, who upon all Occasions sends them to and fro in the World, as the great *Messengers* and *Ministers* of his Providence, to *minister* to the Recovery of *recoverable* Sinners, and to pour out the Vials of his *Wrath* upon the *obstinate* and *unreclaimable*; to *assist*, *protect*, and *comfort* good Men while they live, and when they *depart* from hence to *conduct* their Spirits thro' the *airy Territories* of the *wicked* Angels, into those *blissful Mansions* that are prepared to receive them till the *Resurrection*; at which time their Part will be to *summon* and *gather* both the *good* and *bad* before the Tribunal of Christ, to receive their *final* Sentence to everlasting *Weal or Woe*.

This is the *main* of what we know concerning God's *Government* of *Angels*; the *sincere* Belief of which will be of vast Advantage to us in the whole Course of our Religion. For since there is such a mighty *Colony* of evil Angels *roving* about the World, *watching* all Opportunities to lay *Snares* in our Way, and to tempt us into their *Revolt* and *Ruin*; and since their *Design* in tempting us *now* is only to get us into their *Power*, that so they may *torment* us *hereafter*, how much doth it concern us to *guard* and *defend* ourselves against their *evil Motions* and *Suggestions*, lest by *complying with them* we give them Opportunity to *train* us on from *one* Degree of *Wickedness* to *another*, till they have made us *provoke* the Almighty to *cut* us off, and *abandon* us for ever to their *Rage* and *Fury*; and since they are all of them under his *Restraint*, and can proceed no farther in

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their *mischievous Designs* against us, than he lets loose his Chain to them, how should this *encourage* us manfully to *struggle* and contend against them; since if we do, we may *depend* upon it, that *God* in whose Power *they* are, will either *command* them *off*, or at least not *permit* them to *over-power* us with Temptation. And since, by God's Permission, there are great *Flocks* of good Angels always *hovering* about us, to *guard* us against those *malignant* ones, and to *prompt* us to *Good*, as *they* prompt us to *Evil*, and with their *holy* Inspirations to *countermine* their impure Suggestions, how much doth it import us to *cherish* and *reverence* every pious *Thought* and *Motion*? since, for all we know, it may be the *Whisper* of some *Angel of God*, who by *these* and *such like* holy Injections, is now *struggling* with the Powers of Darkness, to *rescue* our Souls out of their Hands. And since these *blessed* and *benevolent* Spirits do, by God's Appointment, *pitch* their *Tents* about *good* Men, while they *live*, and convey them *safely* to the *Seat* of the *Blessed* when they *die*, how should this *encourage* bad Men to be *good*, and *good* Men to *persevere* in well-doing, since they *place* and *continue* themselves under the blessed *Patronage* of Angels, to be *conducted* safely by them thro' this *perillous* Sea to the *calm* Regions of *Eternal Light*? Thus the Belief of God's *Government of Angels*, so far as he hath thought good to *reveal* it to us, very much *conduces* to a *Holy Life*.

But that which more nearly concerns us, and hath a more *immediate* Influence on our Practice, is his *Government* of Men; the *Belief* of which is *indispensibly* necessary to render us *truly Religious*. Now concerning this Government of God over Men, there are seven things necessary to be believed.

I. That the great *End* of God's Government, is the *Welfare* of *Mankind*.

II. That in order to this End, God hath given us *Laws*, for the *Regulation* and *Government* of our *Actions*.

III. That to *secure* our *Obedience* to *these* Laws, he *hath derived* his *Authority* upon all *lawful Sovereignties*, to govern us *according* to *them*.

IV. That *he* is ready to *contribute* to us all *necessary Assistance*, to enable us to observe these *Laws*.

V. That the Assistance he contributes to us is such as supposes us *free Agents*, and *concurs* with and *maintains* our *natural Freedom*.

VI. That he takes particular Cognisance of the *good* and *ill* Use which we make of our *natural Freedom*.

VII. That he will certainly *reward* or *punish* us *accordingly*.

I. To oblige us to be *truly Religious*, it is necessary we should believe that the great *End* of God's governing us, is our *Welfare* and *Happiness*: That being infinitely *raised* above all *Want* and *Indigence*, he doth not *assume* the Government of us to *advance* himself, or to *gratify* any boundless *Ambition* of his own, which is a Vice that springs out of *Poverty* and *Indigence*, and therefore can have neither *Root* nor *Room* in a Nature so *infinitely* happy as *his*; but that all his Design in *reigning* over us is to do us *good* and to *consummate* our Happiness; to *restore* and *rectify* our disordered Nature, and to advance and raise it to the utmost *Perfection* and *Bliss* and *Glory* it is capable of; to *protect* and *defend* us against present Evils, and *support* us under them, and *convert* them into Instruments of *Good*, and to *rescue* us from the *worst* of Evils *Sin*, and from all those *endless* Miseries it is *pregnant* with. This we ought to believe is the *great* Scope of all *his* Acts of Government, and even of the *direst Punishments* he *inflicts*, which are always *intended* either to *reclaim* the Offenders *themselves*, or to *warn* others by the *sad* Example of their *Suffering* not to follow the *ill* Example of their *Sin*. And that this is the great End of his Government, he himself hath expresly declared. So *Psal.* 145. 9. we are assured that *the Lord is good to all, and that his tender Mercies are over all his Works*; and Verse 13, 14. that in the Exercise of *his everlasting Kingdom, he upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all that are bowed down*; and tho in the *Administration* of his *Government*, he hath decreed to *cut off* all such *obstinate* Rebels

bels as will not be *reduced* by the Methods of his *Love*, yet he hath declared that he *is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance*, 2 Pet. 3. 9. and that *he would have all Men to be saved, and to come to the Knowledge of the Truth*, 1 Tim. 2. 4. And unless we believe him to be a *benevolent* Governor, that aims at the *Good* of his Subjects, we shall look upon his Government as a *cruel Tyranny*, erected for no other End, but to *squeeze* and *oppress* us, to *enthral* our Liberty, and *rob* us of the Rights of our *Nature*, and to chain us down to an *endless* and *easeless* Toil and Wretchedness; and whilst we thus look upon it, it is impossible we should ever *submit* to it with that generous *Freedom* and *Chearfulness* that true Religion *requires*. But if we firmly believe that the *great* Design of it is to promote *our Welfare*, both here and hereafter, we have all the Reason in the World to *covet* to be *governed* by *God*, and to receive *his Yoke* as a mighty *Grace* and *Favour*.

II. To oblige us to be truly religious, it is also necessary we should believe that *God* hath given us *Laws* for the *Regulation* and *Government* of our *Actions*. For without *Laws* to direct Men what to *do*, and what to *avoid*, there can be no such thing as *Government*, the proper Business of which, is to *regulate* Mens Actions, and without a *Rule* there can be no *Regulation*; so that Divine *Rules* or *Laws* are necessarily included in the Divine *Rule* or *Government*; and as God cannot be supposed to give *Laws* without *governing*, so neither can he be supposed to *govern* without *giving Laws*; so that unless we believe that God governs us by *Laws*, we are utterly *destitute* both of all *Reason why*, and of all *Direction wherein* to *obey* him, and have neither *Motive* to *enforce*, nor *Measure* to *regulate* our Obedience. And as it is *necessary* we should *believe*, that he hath given us *Laws*, so it is also necessary we should *believe* that *those* Laws are for *our Good*; that he neither *imposes* them on us *pro imperio*, as arbitrary *Tests* and *Trials* of our Obedience, nor *exacts* them of us to serve *himself*, and advance his own *Interest* and *Greatness*, but that the great *Design* of them is to do *us* good, and to direct our Actions to our *own Interest*; to render our Lives *placid* and *easy*, and to *perfect* and *glorify* our Natures. For while we look upon the *Matter* of God's Law either as *indifferent* in *itself*, and imposed upon us by *him*, for no other End but to shew his *absolute Sovereignty* over us, or as *beneficial* only to *him*, and imposed upon us merely to *promote* his *Interest*, it is impossible we should ever comply with it with a *free* and *chearful* Mind. We may haply obey him out of *Fear* and *Dread*, because he is too *mighty* for us, and not to be *contended* with, without infinite *Peril* and *Disadvantage*; but 'tis impossible we should *obey* those Laws with a *resigned* and *chearful* Will, from which we only fear *Ill*, but expect no *Benefit*. Wherefore, to oblige us to render a *free* and *unforced* Submission to God's Laws, it is *absolutely* necessary we should *believe* that the great Design of them is the Good of *those* they are *imposed* on; and so the *Psalmist* assures us, That *the Statutes of the Lord are perfect, converting the Soul, and making wise the simple; right, rejoicing the Heart; pure, enlightening the Eyes, true and righteous altogether, more to be desired are they than Gold, yea than much fine Gold, sweeter also than the Honey and the Honey-comb, and that in keeping of them there is great Reward*, Psalm 19. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. and that *the Law of God's Mouth was better to him*, that is, for the *Good* it did him, *than thousands of Gold and Silver*, Psalm 119. 72.

And this, if we *firmly* believe it, will infinitely encourage our *Obedience*. For when I am sure that God commands me nothing but what my own *Health* and *Ease* and *Happiness* requires, and that every Law of his is both a *necessary* and a *sovereign* Prescription against the Diseases of my *Nature*, and that he could not have prescribed me *less* than he hath without being *defective* in his Care of my *Recovery* and *Happiness*, with what *Prudence* or *Modesty* can I *grudge* to *obey* him? How can I *think* much to serve him, when I serve *myself* by it to the best Purpose in the World? Or why should I so

much as *wish*, that he had not imposed *this* or *that* Law on me, when I know he imposed it to no *other* End but to *oblige* me to be *happy*, and that he cannot *dispense* with *any* Duty he *requires* of me, without giving me *leave* to be *miserable*. When therefore God's *Authority* doth thus *strike in* with *our Interest*, and walk *hand in hand* with it thro' every Duty it *imposes*, by *refusing* to obey him, we *fight* against *our selves*, and renounce *his* Authority and *our own* Happiness together.

III. To *oblige* us to be *truly religious*, it is also necessary we should believe, that to *secure* our *Obedience* to those *Laws*, God hath *derived* his *own* Authority upon all lawful *sovereign Powers*, to *govern* us according to *them*: That to promote *our* Happiness, which is the End of *his* Government, and to secure our *Obedience* to *his* Laws, which are the *Means* to that *End*, he hath established a *visible Authority* upon *Earth*, to represent his own *invisible Majesty*, and in his Name to *exact* our *Obedience* to his Laws, so far as it is liable to *their* Cognisance, and that the Persons *vested* with *this* Authority, are *exalted* by it above all *Controul* or *Resistance*, and in their several Dominions placed *next to* and *immediately under* God, by *whose* Commission *alone* they *act*, and to *whose* Tribunal *alone* they are *accountable*: So that by resisting *them*, we do as much resist *God*, whose *Deputy-Governors* they *are*, as a *Neapolitan* doth the King of *Spain*, by *levying Arms* against his *Vice-Roy* of *Naples*; and by *refusing* to obey their *just* and *lawful* Commands, we *demur* to *God's* Authority, who in every *just* thing they *impose* or *require*, *speaks* to us by *their* Mouths, and *commands* us by *their* Laws. For so the Scripture tells us, not only that they *are ordained* of God; and that *to resist them is to resist the Ordinance of God*; not only that they are *the Ministers of God*, and that therefore, *for Conscience-sake*, or in Reverence to God's Authority which they bear, they are to be *obeyed*, Rom. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. but that *they judge for God and not for Men*, 2 Chron. 19. 6. and that therefore *their Judgment is God's*, Deut. 1. 17.

The *Disbelief* of which excludes *God's Government* out of the World, and consequently *dissolves* all our *Obligations* of *Duty* and *Allegiance* to him. For, how can he be *Supreme Governor* of the World, if all *other* Governments are not *immediately under* him? And, how can *they* be immediately *under* him, if they are not immediately *authorized* by him? And by what *other* Right can any *Person* or *Persons* pretend to *govern* in God's Kingdom *under* him, but by Commission from him? For every *supreme Authority* is the *Head* and *Fountain* of *all other* Authorities, so far as it *extends*; and if it be not so, it cannot be *supreme*. And therefore, unless *all Authority* be *derived* from *God*, he can have no such thing as a *supreme Authority* in the World. And this, I doubt not, is very well understood by our *Atheistical Politicians*, who, in *pursuance* of their *Denial* of God, derive *all Authority* from the *People*; being truly *aware*, that if the *Authority* of the *Governors* can be derived from the *People*, it will necessarily follow, that *both* must be *independent* from *God*, and that to derive *Authority* to *govern* from any other *Head* but *God*, is to deny him to be the *supreme Governor* of the World, which is the thing they would be at. If it be said, that *God* hath given *Authority* to the *People* to *authorize* their *Governors*, and so he is still *Head* of *all* Authority, tho it be *derived* from him *immediately* thro' the *People*; I answer, That this doth very little *mend* the Matter. For, if God hath given Authority to the People to authorize their Governors, he hath in effect given the *Reins* out of his own *Hands*, and left the *People* to *govern* the *World*. For I would fain know, Do *Governors* govern by *God's* Authority, or the *People's*? If by the *People's*, 'tis the *People* that govern by them and not *God*; if by *God's*, 'tis *God* that governs by them and not the *People*. In short, if they govern by the *People's* Authority, they are, as *Governors*, at least, *independent* from *God*, and *accountable* only to the *Tribunal* of the *People*; if by *God's* Authority,

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they are *Independent* from the *People*, and *accountable* only to the *Tribunal* of *God*. So that whether he *authorizes* them *immediately*, or by the *People*, it is all one, the Queſtion being not ſo much *how* they are authorized, as by *what* Authority they *govern*; if it be by *God's*, to God *alone* they are *accountable*; if by the *People*'s, God's Authority is quite *excluded* from having any Hand in the *Government* of the *World*. In ſhort, if the *Choice* of the *People* makes their *Governor* without God's *authorizing* him, he is the *People*'s *Vice-Roy*, and not *God*'s; but if it be *God* that *authorizes* him, he is *God*'s *Vice-Roy*, and not the *People*'s. So that their *Choice*, even in *Elective* Governments, can ſignify no more than the bare *preſenting* of a Perſon to *God*, to be *authorized* his *Vicegerent* by *him*; who, if their Choice be *juſt* and *lawful*, is ſuppoſed to *conſent* and to *approve* it, and *thereby* to authorize the *Perſon* ſo preſented. For *ſovereign Authority*, in the *Abſtract*, is *ordained* and *inſtituted* by God; but *abſtract Authority* cannot *govern*, unleſs ſome *Perſon* be *veſted* with it; and to *veſt* him with it, *he* muſt not only be applied to the *Authority*, but the *Authority* muſt be alſo applied to *him*; but where the *People* have the *Right* of *Election*, they only apply the *Perſon* to the *Authority*, but 'tis God's *Conſent* and *Approbation* that applies the *Authority* to the *Perſon*, who thereupon commences *Supreme* under God, and hath no *ſuperior Tribunal* but *God*'s to account to.

And thus, according to the Prophet *Daniel*, *the moſt High rules in the Kingdoms of Men*, becauſe as *Lord* of all the *Lords*, and *King* of all the *Kings* of the *Earth*, *he* rules and governs by their *Miniſtry*, and *they* rule and govern by *his Authority*. So that to *ſecure* and *maintain* the *Obligations* which God's *Government* of the World *devolves* upon us, it is neceſſary we ſhould *believe* that all *rightful Sovereigns* are *his* Vicegerents, and do *rule* by his Commiſſion and Authority, and that the *Sword* which they *bear* is *God*'s, who hath *deliver'd* it into their Hands, to *protect* his faithful *Subjects*, and to execute his *Wrath*, and *avenge* his *Authority* upon Evil-doers. So that we cannot *rebel* againſt them, nor *wilfully* diſobey their *juſt* Commands, without giving a *Defiance* to *God* himſelf, and rejecting the Yoke of his Government. Whilſt therefore we behave our ſelves factiouſly and ſeditiouſly towards thoſe whom *God* hath ſet over us, we live as *Out-laws* in the Kingdom of God, without any Reſpect to that viſible Authority by which he *governs* the World; and whilſt we do ſo, all our Pretences to Religion are *impudent* Lies and Impoſtures.

IV. In order to our being truly religious, it is alſo *neceſſary* we ſhould *believe* that God is ready to *contribute* to us all that *Aſſiſtance* which is neceſſary to *enable* us to obſerve his Laws. That whereas in this *corrupt* State of our *Nature*, we are ſo *indiſpoſed* to all *Good* by our *carnal* Affections and *vicious* Habits, as that without ſome *foreign Aid* it is *morally* certain we ſhall never be *reduced* to a *thorow Compliance* with our *Duty*, God is *always ready* not only to *ſecond* but to *prevent* our Endeavours, to *inſpire* good Thoughts into our *Minds*, and by them to kindle *devout* Affections in our *Wills*, and by them to *excite* us to a *conſtant* Courſe of *pious* and *virtuous* Endeavours; and that when he hath proceeded *thus far* with us, he doth not preſently *abandon us* to *our ſelves*, and leave us to *contend* and *ſtruggle* in vain with inſuperable Difficulties; but all along *cooperates* with us, *aids* and *aſſiſts* our Faculties, and with his *holy Inſpirations* cheriſhes our *languiſhing Endeavours*, till they have *wrought* their *Way* thro' all the Difficulties of Religion, into a permanent State of Piety and Virtue. So that unleſs we either turn a *deaf Ear* to thoſe good Thoughts he ſuggeſts to us, and refuſe to *liſten* to their Perſuaſions, or *quench* thoſe *holy* Affections which they *kindle* in us with *earthly* Cares and Pleaſures, or by *wilful* ſinning, harden our Hearts againſt all the *Impreſſions* of his *Grace*, we ſhall not fail of being frequently and powerfully excited by him to Piety and Virtue; and when he thus *excites* us, if we do not wilfully *ſlacken* our

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Endeavours, and basely surrender *back* our selves to our *Lusts*, in despite of all *our* Resolutions and *his* Persuasions to the contrary, we shall be so *effectually* and *constantly* assisted by him, as that it will be *impossible* for us to *fail* of *Success*. For thus the Scripture assures us, that *he gives Grace to the humble*, 1 Pet. 5. 5. and thereby *works in them to will and to do*, Phil. 2. 13. and that to this End, *he gives his Holy Spirit to every one that asks*, Luke 11. 13. The *Belief* of which is *absolutely* necessary to *oblige* us to submit to Religion. For, tho we are *naturally* free to *Good* as well as *Evil*, yet thro' the *vicious* Habits we have generally contracted, either thro' youthful Levity and Inconsideration, or *ill* Education and Example, our *Liberty* to *Good* is so *straiten'd* and confined, that whenever we attempt to *exercise* it, we find a *prevailing Bias* on our *Natures*, that carries us the *contrary* Way, bearing *before* it all our *good* Resolutions, and tiring out our *short-breath'd* Endeavours, so that *the good we would, we do not, and the evil we would not, we do.* And therefore, unless we can depend upon God for *Assistance* against the *Violence* and *Outrage* of our *bad* Inclinations, after we have once *struggled* with them *in vain*, and thereby made a *woful* Experiment of our own *Impotence*, we shall out of mere *Despair* of prevailing against them, give over *attempting* it, and utterly *abandon* our selves to their *Tyranny*.

But if we *firmly* believe that God, who knows *our Weakness* and our *Enemy's Strength*, will in Proportion to *both* readily assist us, whensoever we heartily *invoke* his Aid, and in Concurrence therewith *exert* our own *Endeavour*, we have all the *Encouragement* in the World to undertake our *Duty*, maugre all the *Difficulties* that attend it. For being assured that God will *concur* with our *Endeavours*, we may depend upon it, that not only our *own Endeavours* are in our Power, but *God's Assistance* too; and that the *Corruptions* of our *Nature* do not so much overmatch our Endeavours, as God's *Assistance* overmatches *those* Corruptions. So that if we heartily exert our *Endeavour*, we are sure we cannot *fail* of *Success*; because we know that God will *assist* our *Endeavour*, and that with *his* Assistance we cannot but be *victorious*. Since therefore the *Grace of God* is as much under the Command of *our* Will as our own *Principles* of *Action*, it is as much in *our* Power to do that which we *cannot* do *without* God's Grace, as to do that which we *can*. And therefore if God's *Grace* be *sufficient* to *supply* the *Defect* of our Natural *Power*, and enable us to *conquer* the *Difficulties* of our Duty, we are sure there is nothing in it can be *too hard* for us; because *now* we can do, not only all that we can do by *our selves*, but also all that we can do by the *Grace of God.*

V. To oblige us to be *truly Religious* it is also *necessary* we should *believe* that the *Assistance* which God affords us, is such as supposes us *free Agents*, and *concurs* with and *maintains* our *natural Freedom.* That it doth not necessarily *determine* us to *Good*, but leaves it to our own *free Choice* to *determine* our selves which *way* we please, that as he acts upon *necessary Agents* by a *necessary Influx* and *Causality* which they cannot *resist*, and *determines* those things to act by *his* Will, which have no Will of their own to *determine* them, so he acts upon *free* Agents by a *free* and *unconstraining* Influence, *i. e.* by *suggesting* Arguments to their *Minds*, to *incline* and *persuade* them, but leaves it to their own *Liberty* to *consider* those Arguments or *not*, and to *comply* with those *Persuasions* or *reject* them; and that tho as he hath sometimes *suspended* the *Powers* of *necessary* Agents, and *interrupted* the *natural Course* of their *Motion*, as when he forbad the *Sun* to *move*, and the *Fire* to *burn*, so he hath at other times *restrained* the *natural* Liberty of *free Agents*, and *determin'd* them by an *over-ruling* Necessity, yet both the *one* and the *other* are *extraordinary* and *miraculous*; but that in the *ordinary* Course of his Government, he doth as well leave *free Agents* to that *natural Freedom* with which he first *created* them, as *necessary* ones to those *Necessities* which he first *impressed* upon their *Natures*.

For his *Providence* is succedaneous to his *Creation*, and did at first *begin* where that *ended*, and doth still *proceed* as it *began*, ordering and governing all things according to the several *Frames* and *Models* in which he first *cast* and *created* them. Nor can he order and *govern* them *otherwise* without *unravelling* his own *Creation*, and making things to be otherwise than he *first* made them. For how can he ordinarily *necessitate* those *Agents* whom he first made *free*, without changing their *Natures* from *free* to *necessary*, and making them a *different* Kind of Being than he made them? So that tho in the Course of his Government *God* doth powerfully importune and persuade us, yet he lays no *Necessity* on our *Wills*, but leaves us *free* to choose or refuse; and as the *Temptations* of Sin incline us one Way, so the *Grace of God* inclines us another, but both leave us to our own *Liberty* to go which *way* we please. And this the *Scripture* plainly asserts, where it makes mention of Mens *resisting the Holy Ghost*, Acts 7. 51. and *grieving and quenching the Spirit of God*, Ephes. 4. 30. 1 Thess. 5. 19. and *refusing to hear when God calls, and to regard when he stretches forth his Hand*, and of their *setting his Counsel at nought, and rejecting his Reproofs*, Prov. 1. 24, 25. and in a word, where it makes mention of some Mens baffling and defeating that very Grace which would have conquered and persuaded others, *Matth.* 11. 21. Which plainly imply that all that Assistance to do our Duty, that God ordinarily vouchsafes us in the Course of his Government, is such as no Way determines or necessitates us.

The Belief of which is highly necessary to *engage* us in the *Service* of *Religion*. For while Men imagine that their Duty is *such* as they cannot heartily *comply* with, without being *compelled* to it by an *irresistible* Grace, and that *no Assistance* of God can be sufficient to this *End*, but that which suspends their *Liberty* to *Evil*, and fatally determines them to *Good*, what should move them to *exert* their own Endeavour? Why should they watch and pray and strive and contend against a *corrupt Nature*? For if God will make them good *irresistibly*, their Endeavour is *needless*; but if he will not, it is *Labour in vain*. To what End should they *ply* the Oar to *stem* the *Tide* of a *degenerate Nature*, since without an *irresistible Gale* from Heaven they shall never succeed, and with it they shall, whether they *ply* or *no*? So that while Men live in Expectance of an *irresistible Grace* to make them *good*, they quit themselves of all their Obligations to a pious and virtuous *Endeavour*; but so long as they believe, that God's *Grace* is such as supposes and leaves them *free*, such as they may *defeat* or *prosper* by the *good* or *ill* use of their Liberty, they cannot but discern themselves infinitely obliged to *co-operate* with it, to listen and consent to its blessed *Motions* and *Persuasions*, and constantly to endeavour to *comply* with them in their *Actions*, or at least not to *resist* them, and *harden* and *fortify* themselves against them, by acting counter *to*, and flying in the Face *of* their own *Convictions*. For since the *Grace of God* doth not determine us to *good*, but leaves us to our own Freedom, we can never expect to be determined to *good* without our free *Concurrence*; which if we *refuse*, we shall certainly perish in our *Sin*, and have not only the *Blood* of our own *Souls* to answer for, but all that *Grace* too which we have *baffled* and *defeated*.

VI. To oblige us to be *truly Religious* it is necessary that we should believe, That God takes particular *Cognisance* of the *good* and *ill Use* we make of our *natural Freedom*; that he doth not merely gaze upon our Actions as an indifferent and unconcerned Spectator, but beholds them with the highest Concern and Regard, with infinite Complacency or Detestation, and treasures them up in his all-comprehending Mind, to be produced *for* or *against* us in the Day of fearful *Reckonings* and *Accounts*; that he doth not *inspect* our Actions with a passant and cursory View, as things of little or no *Moment*, but lays them up in everlasting Remembrance, so that every *good* or *ill* thing we do, stands upon *Record* in the *Mind* of God in order to our *final* Acquittal or Condemnation. For so the Scripture tells us, not only that *God's Eyes are*

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upon the Ways of Man, and that he seeth all his Goings, Job 34. 21. and that *his Eyes run to and fro throughout the Earth, and are in every Place beholding the good and evil,* 2 Chron. 16. 9. and Prov. 15. 3. but that he *sees* good Actions tho *done in secret, and will reward them openly,* Matt. 6. 6. and that *he will bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil,* Eccles. 12. 14.

The Belief of which is absolutely necessary to *found* the *Obligations* of Religion. For if we suppose either that God *sees* not our *Actions*, or looks upon them with an *indifferent Eye*, without taking any *Notice* or *Cognisance* of them, there is no *Religious Consideration* can *oblige* us. For upon *this* Supposal, our Actions must all be *indifferent* to *him*; and if they are *indifferent* to *him*, what Reason have *we* to make any Difference between them? 'Tis true, *good* Actions are in themselves *beneficial*, and *evil* ones *prejudicial* to us, and therefore for our own Interest-sake we ought to choose the *one* and refuse the *other*; but this, *abstracted* from all Respects to God, is only a *prudential* and not a *religious Obligation*; but why should we do any *good*, or *avoid* any *evil* upon God's Account, if *good* and *evil* are alike to him? But if we firmly believe that God not only *sees* whatsoever we *do*, but takes particular *Notice* of all our *good* and *evil* Actions, and out of an *high* Complacency in the *one*, and Abhorrence of the *other*, treasures up *both* in *everlasting* Remembrance, we cannot but discern our selves *obliged* by all the *Reason* in the *World* to *choose* what is *good*, and *eschew* what is *evil*. For what an infinite Encouragement is it to do *good*, to consider that while we are doing it, God's *Eye* is upon us, regarding us with high *Applause* and *Approbation*, and entring it with all its acceptable *Circumstances* into the eternal *Record* of his own *Mind*, from whence it shall be *produced* in the last *Day* and *proclaimed* before *Men* and *Angels*, to our everlasting *Honour* and *Glory*? So that when our *Memory* is lost upon Earth, and all that we did is *swallowed up* in the deep *Abyss* of *Oblivion*, all our Pieties and Virtues shall be *famed* in the *Records* of *Heaven*, and have *everlasting Memorials* in the Mind of God. As on the contrary, what an infinite *Discouragement* is it from *sinning*, to consider that the *Eye* of that God to whom *Vengeance belongs* is intent upon us, *following* us thro' all our *Retreats* and *Concealments*, and *recording* every *ill Deed* and all its foul Aggravations in the eternal *Volumes* of his own *Remembrance*, which he will *one Day* most certainly *open* and *read out* before all the *World* to our everlasting *Shame* and *Confusion*? So that when the *Pleasure* of our Sin is gone, and all that render'd it *tempting* and *desirable* for ever *vanish'd* and *forgotten*, the Shame and Infamy of it shall stand upon *Record*, and be transmitted down to *eternal* Ages.

VII. And lastly, To oblige us to be *truly Religious* it is also *necessary* we should believe that *God* will *reward* and *punish* us according to our *Doings*; that he is neither an *idle*, nor an *impotent* Spectator of our Actions, that merely *pleases* and *vexes* himself with the Contemplation of them; but that all the Notice he takes of them is in order to his *rewarding* and *punishing* them, which he will one Day most certainly do to our everlasting *Joy* or *Confusion*. But, because this Argument will be the Subject of the ensuing Chapter, I shall insist no farther on it here.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Of the Proofs *and* Evidences *which there are to create in us a* Belief *of the* Divine Providence.

HAving in the foregoing Section given an Account of those *Parts* or *Branches* of the *Divine Providence*, which are *necessary* to be *believed* in order to the *founding* the *Obligations* of *Religion*, I shall proceed in the next place to shew what *Evidences* there are to create this *Belief* in us; and because this is the great *Fundamental* of *all* Religion, upon the *Belief* of which it all *immediately* depends, I shall endeavour to *demonstrate* the *Truth* of it.

I. *A priori*, by Arguments drawn from God *himself*.

II. *A posteriori*, by Arguments drawn from *sensible Effects* of God in the World.

I. I shall endeavour to assert the *Truth* of a *Divine Providence* by Arguments drawn from *God himself*. For supposing that there is a *God*, that is to say, an infinitely *wise*, and *good*, and *powerful* Cause of all Things, (which I doubt not to make appear when I come to discourse of the *sensible Effects* of God in the World) it will from thence necessarily follow that he *upholds*, *disposes*, and *governs* all things by an *over-ruling Providence*: For,

I. If there be such a *God*, he must necessarily *be* and *exist* of *himself*, without any *dependence* upon any Superior Cause.

II. He must necessarily be the *Cause* of all *other things* that *are* and do *exist*.

III. He must necessarily be *present with* all Things.

IV. Where-ever he is, so active are his *Perfections* that he cannot but *operate* wheresoever he finds *Objects* to work *upon*. From all which I shall make appear it will necessarily follow, that he continually *exercises* an over-ruling *Providence* over the World.

I. If there *be* a God, he must necessarily *exist* or *be* of *himself* without *Dependence* on any Superior Cause. For when we speak of *God*, we mean by him a Being that is *as perfect*, as it is *possible*, that hath nothing *before* him, nothing *superior* to him, nothing *greater* than himself; which cannot be meant of any *derived* Being; because all Effects are *after* their Causes, and in some respect *inferior* to them, as *deriving* their Beings, and all their Excellencies and Perfections *from* them. But to say of God, that he is *after* or any way *inferior* to any Cause, is a palpable *Contradiction* to the very *Notion* of him; 'tis to say, that there is something *before* the *eternal* Something, *superior* to the *supreme* Something, more *Perfect* than *infinite* Perfection. So that either there *can* be *no* such Being as a *God* in the World, or he must be *of himself* or *from* his *own* Essence, in which there must be such an infinite *Fulness* of *Being*, as that from all Eternity *past* to all Eternity *to come*, it is *infinitely* removed from *not Being*, and so by Necessity of Nature must *from* ever *have* been and *for* ever *be*. And *such* a Being we must admit of, whether we will admit of a *God* or *no*; for either we must allow that *this World*, or at least the *Matter* of it exists of *itself* by its own *never-failing* Fulness of Being, without ever needing any *Cause* to *produce* it, (which as I shall shew you by and by is *impossible*) or that all things in it *derive* their Being from some *first Cause*, who having *no* Cause in being *before* him must necessarily be *uncaused* and *unproduced*; and if God exists *of himself*, as he *must* do supposing he *is*, he must be *superior* to all things; for that which is of *itself* cannot but *be*, and that which cannot but be, can have no Power above it, because if it *hath*, that Power might have either *hindred* or *extinguished* its Being, and so it might *not* have been.

So that God's *Self-existence* necessarily supposes him exalted *above* all Power and Superiority, and consequently to be the *supreme* and *sovereign* Power *over* all things; but to suppose him to be *Supreme* and *Sovereign* without exercising *Rule* and *Dominion*, is *ridiculous*; for without the Exercise of *Dominion* su-

preme Power is but an *useless* and *insignificant Cypher-flourish* with a glorious Name, *Rule* and *Dominion* being the only proper *Sphere* for *supreme Power*, as such, to *move* and *act* in. So that unless God *rules* and *governs*, he is Supreme *to no Purpose*, and his sovereign Power is *useless* and *in vain*: For if he exert his sovereign Power at all, it must be in *Rule* and *Dominion*, which is its only natural *Province*; but if he doth *not*, his Sovereignty is only a *Majestick Sloth* that sits *sleeping* in an *awful* Throne with its *Hands* in its *Bosom*, without ever doing any thing that is *Sovereign*; and of what Use is that *sovereign Power* that never exercises any *Act* of *Sovereignty*? Since therefore God's *Self-Existence* necessarily *supposes* his *sovereign Power* over all Things, we must either grant that he continually *exercises* this Power in ruling and governing the World, or assert that it is utterly useless and in vain, which, as I shall shew by and by, is as *absurd* as it is *blasphemous*.

II. If there be a God, he must necessarily be the *Cause* of all *other* things that *are* and do *exist*. For whatsoever might *not* have been, or may *not* be, must be derived from something which cannot *but be*. If it might not have been, how came it to *be*? Not from *itself* to be sure, for then it must *always* have necessarily *been*; and therefore it must finally be resolved into some *other* Cause which is of *itself*, and so cannot but always *have been* and always *be*. Now that this World is not of *itself*, but from some *other* Cause that is of *itself*, is evident; because whatsoever is of *itself*, must necessarily have all the *Being*, and all the *Perfection* of Being that is *possible*. For that which is of *itself* is *necessarily* of it self, and it is not only true *that it cannot but be*, but also *that it cannot but be of itself*; for if it might not have been of *itself*; it might not have been *at all*, because *itself*, or its *own Essence*, is the only *Ground* or *Reason* of its Being; and therefore, if that *Reason* might have *fail'd*, it might *never* have been *at all*. Now that which *necessarily* is of *itself*, hath neither *actual* nor *possible* Cause of Being; for if it hath an *actual* Cause, it is not of *itself*; if any *possible* one, it is not *necessarily* of itself; and if it hath no *possible* Cause of Being, it is *all* that it's *possible* to *be*, that is, it is so *complete* and *perfect*, that no possible *Being*, or *Perfection* of Being can be *added* to it.

Besides, that which is of *itself* includes *Necessity* of Being in its *Essence*, and that which includes Necessity of Being, must always *actually* be what it *is*, and have nothing *potential* in its Nature; and that which hath nothing *potential* must have all *possible* Being and Perfection. For, if there be any *possible Perfection* of Being which it *hath* not, it must be in *Possibility* of being what it *is* not; and if so, it is not *necessarily* what it *is*. So that if the World be of *itself*, it must include in the Nature of it, a *Necessity* of Being, and if so, it must always *actually* be, that is, be always out of all *Possibility* either of *not being* or of being *what* it *is not*; and if it be out of all Possibility of not Being, it must have all possible *Being*; if out of all Possibility of being what it is not, it must have all possible *Perfection of Being*; that is, all possible *Power*, and *Knowledge*, and *Wisdom*, and *Goodness*, which do all as necessarily result from *Self-Being*, as any *essential Property* from any *Essence*. Since therefore this material World hath none of these *possible Perfections* of Being in it, it is impossible it should be of *itself*, and if it be not of itself, it must have a *Cause* of Being that is distinct *from and before* itself: and what can this Cause be but *God*? since that which *caused* the World must be *before* all Causes, and that which is before all Causes must be *uncaused*, and of *itself*, and that which is of itself, must have *all possible Perfection*, and consequently be *God*.

Since therefore the World was *made* by God, it will from hence necessarily follow, that it is *ruled* and *governed* by him. For, if he made the World, to be sure he made it for *some End*, it being unconceivable that infinite *Wisdom* should frame a World that is capable of the most *noble* and *excellent* Ends, without *designing* it to *any* End at all; and if he designed it for any End, to be sure he is *concerned* that *that* End, whatever it be, should be *accomplished*;

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and if he be, his own Concernment will lead him to the *Exercise* of a *Providence*, which is nothing else but a *constant* and *steady* Guidance of those Beings which he hath made, to those *common* and *particular* Ends for which he made them. For, if he made them for *any* End, to be sure *whatever* it was, he did not let it *drop* out of his *Mind* and *Thoughts* as soon as he had made them, but still carries it along in his *Eye* and *Intention*; and if he still *intends* that End, there is no doubt but he still *prosecutes* it, which he cannot do without a *Providence*: For how can he *drive* things on to the *Ends* for which he *made* them, if he be withdrawn from the *World*, and hath wholly sequestred himself from all the *Affairs* of it.

III. If there be a *God*, he must necessarily be *present with* all things; because being of *himself* without any Cause, he must be without any *Bounds* or *Limits* of Being. For it is altogether unconceivable how any thing that is of itself should be *restrained* or *limited* by itself. For tho we must allow something to be of *itself*, whether we will admit of a *God* or no, yet we cannot suppose that which is of *itself* to be the *Cause* of itself, without a *Contradiction*; because every *Cause* must be *before* its *Effect*; and therefore to suppose that which is of itself, to be the *Cause* of itself, is to suppose it to be *before* itself, that is, to *be* when it is *not*, or to *be* and *not to be* together, which is *impossible*. When therefore we say that *something* is *of itself*, our meaning can be no other than *this*, that it hath such an *immense Plenitude* of Being in itself, as that it neither *needed* nor *required* any *Cause* to produce it; and how can that which is of itself without being the Cause of itself, be any way *restrained* or *limited* by itself? For that which *limits* Beings, is only the *Will* or *Power* of their *Causes*, which either *would* not or *could* not bestow any farther *Being* or *Perfection* upon them; and therefore only such things as are *caused* are *limited*, because they being produced out of *nothing*, are only so far and no farther brought into Being, as their Cause was *willing* or *able* to bring them. That therefore which exists of *itself* without any *Cause* of *Being*, must exist of itself without any *Limits* of *Being*; because it was neither limited by *itself*, nor by any *other* Cause; and that which hath *nothing* to *limit* it, must necessarily be *immense* and *boundless*. God therefore being this *Self-existing Being*, must necessarily be of an *unlimited Essence*; an Essence which no *possible Space* can either *circumscribe* or *define*, but must necessarily be *diffused thro'* all, *circumfused about* all, and *present with* all things.

And if he be *present with* all things, how is it imaginable he should *sit still* among them, and exercise no *Providence* over them? For since he is a *living Being*, he must be *vitally* present wheresoever he *is*, and that he should be *vitally* and yet *unactively* present among a *World of Beings*, that he should live in this wide *University* of things, and in every *Part* of it, and yet take no more *Notice of*, have no more *Influence upon* it than if he were a *dead* and *senseless* Idol, is altogether *unconceivable*; and we may as well imagine a *Sun* in the Universe without *Heat* or *Light*, as a *living* God *surrounding* and *penetrating* all things without ever *exerting* his *active Powers*, or *shedding forth* his *vital Influence* upon them. For where-ever *Life is*, it will *operate*; and therefore since God, who is all *Life* and *Activity*, is every where, he must *operate* every where, and if he *operate* every where, that *Operation* is an *Universal Providence*.

IV. And lastly, If there be a God, he must be endowed with all those *active* Perfections of *Power* and *Wisdom*, *Justice* and *Goodness*; all which must be *present* wheresoever he is. For as for *Power*, It is nothing else but the *Spring* or *Fountain* of *Causality*; and therefore since God is the *first* Cause, he must necessarily be the *Spring* of the *Power* of all *Causes*, and that from which all *Power* is derived must itself be *all-powerful*; otherwise it would derive more Power than it hath, and be the *Cause* of that whereof it hath no *Causality*, which is a *Contradiction*. And then as for *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, they are inseparable to perfect *Power*; which how *forcible* soever it be, cannot be *perfect* except it be conducted by *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, for without *these*, Power is

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only an *irresistible Whirlwind* that sweeps and hurries all things before it without any *End*, or *Method*, or *Order*. And what a *lame, blind* and *defective* Power must that be that can neither *design* nor *contrive*, neither *propose* to itself *beneficial* Ends, not yet *choose* suitable *Means* to effect them? and in a Word, that can neither intend *well* nor prosecute *wisely*? If therefore the Power of God be *perfect*, as it cannot but be; being the Original of *all* Power, it must necessarily be *conjoin'd* with perfect *Wisdom* and *Goodness*; with perfect Goodness to level its Intentions at *good* and *beneficial* Ends; with perfect Wisdom to *order* and *direct* its Prosecutions.

Since therefore perfect *Power*, and *Wisdom* and *Goodness* are essential to God, they must be *co-extended* with his *Essence*, which as I shewed before, is *extended* to *all* things. And how can we conceive such *active* Perfections as these to be *present with* all things without ever *acting upon* them? For the very *End* and *Perfection* of all these Attributes consists in their *Exercise*; for so the End of *Power* is *Action*, the End of *Wisdom* is *ordering* and *contriving*, and the End of *Goodness* is *doing good*. How then can we suppose that an infinite *Power*, whose End is *Action*, should be *present* where a World of Things are to be *done*, and *do nothing*? that infinite *Wisdom*, whose End is *ordering* and *contriving*, should be *present* where a World of Things are to be *ordered*, and *order nothing*? Or that infinite *Goodness*, whose End is *doing good*, should be *present* where a World of *good* is to be *done*, and *do* none *at all*? What is this, but to transform the Divine *Perfections* into senseless *Idols*, that have *Eyes*, but *see not*, *Hands* but *act not*; that have *boundless*, but *useless* and *unactive* Powers; that have *Glorious Names*, but in reality stand but for so many *Cyphers* in the World? And thus I have endeavoured to *demonstrate* a *Providence* by Arguments drawn from *God* himself: But because there may be something in them too *subtile* and *metaphysical* for common Apprehensions to reach, I have but briefly insisted on them. I proceed therefore, in the second place, to another sort of Arguments, which are more easy and obvious; *viz.* such as are drawn from *sensible Effects*, of which I shall give these six Instances.

I. The constant *Direction* of Things to the same *good Ends*, which have no *Design* in themselves.

II. The *watchful Providence* of Things, which have no *Foresight* in themselves.

III. The mutual *Agreement* and *Correspondency* of things, which have no *Understanding* of themselves or of one another.

IV. The *Continuation* of Things in the same *comely Order*, which have no *Government* of themselves.

V. *Miraculous* Events.

VI. *Predictions* of *future* and *remote* Contingencies.

I. One sensible Instance of a *Divine Providence* is the constant *Direction* of Things to the same *good Ends* which have no *Design* in themselves. When we see things *void* of all Sense and Reason as constantly *directed* to *good* Ends, as they could be if they *had* Sense and Reason, we may be sure that there is a Reason *without* them that *framed* them for those Ends, and *directs* them to them; it being unconceivable how *Chance* or blind *Necessity*, that have no *Design*, or *Art*, or *Contrivance* in them, should *constantly* operate as *regularly* as *Reason* itself. Now if we survey this vast Universality of Things, we may easily observe, *at least* of the *generality* of them, that they are framed *for* and directed *to* some *wise* and *excellent* End; and tho, thro' our own *short-sightedness* or *want* of *Enquiry*, we do not see the *Use* and *Tendency* of them *all*, yet this is no Argument at all that they are *vain* and *superfluous*: For, as we now see the Use of a World of Things which *past* Generations understood not, so there is no doubt but *future* Generations will understand the Use of a World more than *we*; and therefore since the *Usefulness* of the Generality of Things is now so apparent and visible, we ought in all reason to conclude, that our *not discerning* the *Usefulness* of them *all*, proceeds not from *their Defect*, but from *our own Ignorance*.

Let us therefore briefly survey this *beautiful* Scene of Things that is *before* us. The *Sun* and *Earth*, for instance, are Things that are utterly *void* of *Understanding*, and therefore can have no *Design* or *Contrivance* in them; how then came they to *place* and *continue* themselves at such a *commodious* Distance from one another; whereas in such a *vast* and *immense* Space they might have found ten thousand Millions of *other* Places and Distances to *fix* in? The *Earth* might have found *room enough* to place it self either *much nearer* to, or *much remoter* from the *Sun* than it *is*; but if it had done *so*, it must have either been everlastingly *parched* or everlastingly *frozen* and *benighted*, and either way *converted* into an *useless*, *barren*, and *uninhabitable* Desart; whereas, where it now is, it stands at the most *convenient* Distance from the *Sun*, to be *warmed* and *cherished* by his *enlivening* Fires, and neither to be *roasted* by being too *near* them, nor *frozen* by being too *far* from them; but to receive from them such a *temperate* heat, as is sufficient to *excite* its *seminal* Virtues, and to *draw up* its *Juices* into them, and thereby to *ripen* its natural *fruits*, and in a word to *comfort* and *refresh* its Inhabitants, and to render it to them a *pleasant*, a *healthful*, and a *fruitful* Paradise. Since therefore of ten thousand Millions of Places wherein it *might* have fixed in that *Immensity* of *Space* that *surrounds* it, it hath *fixed upon*, and doth still *continue* in the *best*, without any *Design* or *Wisdom* of its own, it is plain that there *is* an over-ruling Wisdom *without* it, that *chose* its Place and *fixes* and *determines* it thereunto. Again, How came the *Sun* (for whether it be the *Earth* that moves about the *Sun*, or the Sun *about* the Earth is all one to our Enquiry) how came this Sun, I say, which hath no *Reason* to govern it self by, to be *determined* to such a *useful* Course of Motion? what makes this *vast* and *mighty* Body *move round* the Earth in twenty four Hours, in finishing which *spacious* Circle of Motion it must fly far *swifter* than a Bullet from a Cannon's Mouth; and yet thro' so many Ages each twenty four Hours it hath *constantly* performed it, without being so much as one Minute *faster* or *slower*; whereby it makes those *just* and *regular* Returns of *Day* and *Night* to both the *Hemispheres*, so that neither the *one* or the *other* is either too much *heated* by his Presence, or too long *benighted* by his Absence; because as soon as the *one* hath been sufficiently *warmed* and *cherished* with his Rays, he immediately *retires* from it into the *other*, and by so doing he gives the *active* Animals leave to *rest*, the *over-heated* Air to *cool*, and the *gasping* Earth to repair its *fainting* Virtues, which a *continued* heat would soon *exhaust* and *extinguish*. Thus by returning *Day* and *Night* to both Parts of the Earth once in twenty four Hours, he preserves both their *Heat* and *Moisture*, upon which all *Generation* depends, in a *due* and *regular* Temper; so that neither their radical *Moisture* is *consumed* by the *parching* Droughts of the *Day*, nor their vital *Heat extinguished* by the *cool* Moistures of the *Night*, but the one still *allays* and *tempers* the other by their *quick* and *alternate* Revolutions. How then came the Sun, that *understands* no Utility, and *designs* no End, to be *determined* to this Course of Motion, which above all others is so admirably *useful* and *advantageous* to this World we live in? Again, What is the Reason that since he thus *equally* moves round the Earth, he doth not *always* move in the same Circle; but run out every Day into a different Circle almost a whole Degree farther *Northward* or *Southward*, and this so *constantly* and *precisely*, that in six thousand succeeding Revolutions, he hath never varied so much as *one* Minute from his Course either *one* way or the *other*, and by these his *stated Excurrences* towards the *North* and *South*, he makes the *Seasons* of the *Year*, gives a *Summer* and a *Winter*, a *Spring* and a *Fall*, to all Parts of the Earth, without which the Earth would long ere this have been utterly *useless*, and all its *Fruits*, and for want of them its *Animals* too, would have for ever *perished*? For some Parts of it would have been *scorched* with everlasting *Heat*, others *bound up* with everlasting *Frost*; here it would have been all a *Sandy*, there all an *Icy* Desart, and so both *Vegetation* and *Generation* would every where have utterly *ceas'd*, either for want of *Moisture* or for want of *Heat*. How came the Sun then, which hath neither

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Senſe nor *Reaſon* of his own to *guide* him, to be *directed* into ſuch a *commodious* Courſe of annual Motion, when as in that vaſt Space he moves in, he might as well have run ten thouſand *other* Courſes of Motion; he might have moved all the Year round the *Earth*'s *Equator*; but if he had done ſo, all the *middle* Tracts of Earth both *Northward* and *Southward* would ſoon have been *ſcorched* up with his continual *Preſence*, and all the *remoter* Parts both ways would quickly have *died* with *Cold* thro' his perpetual *Abſence*: Or he might have run his annual Courſe on *one* Side only of the Earth's *Equator*; and made his circular Excurſions *to* or *beyond* the *Pole*; but if he had done ſo, he muſt have left a great Part of the oppoſite Hemiſphere expoſed to everlaſting *Night* and *Cold*: Whereas in the annual Courſe of Motion he *now* performs, he ſheds forth his *Light*, and *Heat*, and *Influence* over all the World, and by turns gives every Part its *Yearly* Seaſons; which is a plain Evidence, that all his Motions are *conducted* by a *wiſe* and *over-ruling* Mind, which among ſo *many* Courſes of Motion that lie before him in the *boundleſs* Space he moves in, hath *determined* him to *that* which, for Perpetuity, is much the *beſt* and moſt *commodious*.

And the ſame is to be ſaid of the Motions of the *Moon*, which Nature hath deſigned for a *vicarious* Light to the Sun, to *ſupply* his Abſence, and *perform* his Office in this lower World. For what makes this *ſenſeleſs* and *irrational* Planet, that moves without any *Intention* of its own, wander by turns *Northward* and *Southward* ſome Degrees beyond the Sun? And what makes it move *Northward* when the Sun is *Southward*, and again *Southward* when the Sun is *Northward*; whereas in that *immenſe* Space wherein it ſwims, it hath room enough to run a thouſand *other* Courſes of Motion, none of which could have been ſo *advantageous* to us as *this*? For by moving *Northward* when the Sun is *Southward*, and ſo *è contra*, it *moderates* the Cold and Darkneſs of the Winter Nights; and by paſſing beyond the *Tropicks*, which are the Boundaries of the Sun, it in ſome meaſure ſupplies his *Abſence*, by enlightening thoſe *long* and *tedious* Nights in which the Regions towards the *Poles* are buried; which is a plain Inſtance of the ſingular *Care* of *Providence*, that no Parts of the Earth ſhould be left altogether *deſtitute* of the *neceſſary* Comforts of the Heavenly *Light* and *Warmth*.

Again, How came the *Air*, *which* hath no *Deſign* in itſelf, to place itſelf ſo *commodiouſly* as it hath done between the *Earth* and the *Heavens*? Why is there not a wide *Vacuity* between? Or if ſome *Body* muſt needs *intervene*, why was it not *Fire* or *Water* as well as *Air*, which of all other Bodies is the moſt *commodious*? For had it been a *void Space*, there could have been no *Intercourſe* between *Heaven* and *Earth*, or had it been *filled* with *Fire* or *Water*, it would have *conſumed* or *drowned* the Earth and all Things belonging to it; but as for the Air, which is a *thin*, *ſoft*, *fluid* and *tranſparent* Body, it is of all others the moſt *proper Vehicle* of the Celeſtial Influences. For what other *Body* is there, that thro' ſuch a *ſtupendous* Diſtance could have conveyed down to us the *Light* and *Heat* of the Sun, with ſuch an *ineffable* Swiftneſs; or what other *Element* could have been ſo *proper* for Animals to *move* and *breathe* in? Since therefore this Space between the Earth and Heavens might have been ſupplied with other *Bodies*, but with none ſo *fit* as Air, which yet is no way *conſcious* of its own Fitneſs, and ſo cannot be ſuppoſed to *chooſe* this Space for itſelf, it is a plain *Evidence* that there was a *wiſe* Mind *without* it, that *choſe* this Habitation for it.

And now we are come down to this *terreſtrial* Globe, which conſiſts of *Earth* and *Water*, let us briefly conſider the admirable Uſe of *both*, and of all Things *appertaining* to them. How came the *ſenſeleſs* Water to bore *Holes* and *Channels* in the Banks of the Ocean thro' long *Tracts* of Earth, and againſt its own Nature to *climb* up to the Tops of Mountains, that ſo it may be able not only to run down *again* with *Eaſe*, but alſo to carry itſelf to *ſuch Heights* afterwards, as the Neceſſities of *Men* and *Beaſts* require, and to *unite*

into *large Rivers*, that run into all the *inland* Parts of the Earth, watering both them and their *thirsty* Animals all along as they *go*, till *at last* they *return* into the *Ocean* again? How came this *dull* and *senseless* Element, that can *consult* neither its own Convenience nor that of other Beings, to be *salt* where it is convenient for *it self* to be *salt*, *viz.* in the *Ocean*, by which it is preserved from *Putrefaction*; and *fresh* where it is convenient for *other* Beings that it should be *fresh*, *viz.* in the *Fountains* and *Rivers*, that so it may be fit to *fructify* the *Earth*, and be a *wholesom* Drink for its *Animals*? How came so many *Rivers* and *Fountains*, which do all arise from the *salt* Waters of the *Sea*, to be *stripp'd* of their *salt Particles*, by ouzing thro' the Pores of the Earth, and *thereby* to be render'd both *fruitful* to the *Ground*, and *wholesom* for *Men* and *Beasts*? How comes it to pass that so many *Clouds* as are *drawn up* out of the *salt* Ocean, should in their *Ascent* so far *shake off* their *Salt*, as to *descend* back again upon the Earth in *sweet* and *fresh* Showers? And how come those *Vapours* of which the *Clouds* consist, and which are much *thicker* and *heavier* than the Air, to be drawn *aloft* as they are by the *Rays* of the *Sun*, which have neither *Pumps* nor *Buckets* to *exhale* them? And when they *are* aloft in the *Air*, how come they to gather into *thick* Clouds, and not rather to *disperse* themselves about in that vast *Expansum*, or to *return* back again to the Earth in thin Vapours as they *arose*; and while they *hang* in the Air, what is it that *sustains* their *Weight*, and when they *fall*, how comes it to pass that they ordinarily fall in *soft* and *gentle* Showers that water the *Roots* of the *Grass* and *Corn*, without any prejudice to their *Stalks* and *Blades*, and not rather in *Mists* or *Streams*, which either would be *insufficient* to moisten the Earth, or *lay waste* its Corn and Fruit with the *Violence* of their *Fall*? All which are *illustrious* Instances of a *wise* and *powerful* Providence, that *directs* and *orders* this *senseless* Element, and causes it ordinarily to *move* and *act* as if it had Wisdom in *it self*, and did therewithal *industriously* consult the *publick Good* of *the* World. But this Argument you may find handled more at large in a late excellent Treatise *de Deo*.

And now we are arrived to the *Earth*, whereon we live and move and have our Beings, which tho itself be of a *broken* and *irregular* Figure, and seems to be rather the *mighty Ruins* of some more *beautiful* Structure, than an *Original Effect* of the Divine *Art* and *Contrivance*, yet contains in it the most *amazing* Instances of an *all-wise* and *all-powerful* Providence. For how comes this *dull* and *stupid* Lump to be *impregnated* with such an infinite *Variety* of *Seminal Virtues*, all which do proceed as *orderly* and *artificially* in the Formation of their *Plants* and *Fruits*, as if they were every one endued with a most *wise* and *intelligent* Mind? For since the Plants do all *derive* their *Nourishment* from the *inward* Parts of the Earth, it is necessary that some Parts of them should be *buried* under Ground, that so they may *come* at their *Food*; and that *these* Parts should be fitted with *spongy Strings* to fasten them to the Earth, and to *suck* in those Juices of it whereon they *feed*; and accordingly the *seminal Virtue* of every Plant first *forms* it self a *Root* under Ground, which runs out *more* or *less* from the Centre of it into *greater* or *smaller* Strings, *proportionable* to the Magnitude of the Plant it bears, that so how *great* soever it be, it may by these *Strings* be so *fasten'd* to the Earth, as that the Wind to which its *upper* Parts are exposed, may not be able to *tear* them *up*. Then this *seminal Form*, whatsoever it be, *digests* these Strings into a *porous* and *spongy* Substance, fit to *suck* in the Juices of the Earth on every Side, and bores little *Holes* or strait *Fibres* thro' them from one end to the other, that so by these *Conduit-pipes* they may all *convey* the Juices they *imbibed* into the Centre of the Root; and having thus *formed* its Root, and by these Strings or nervous Filaments *supplied* it with plenty of Juice, by strange mysterious Art it *concocts* the *liquid* Matter into a *hard* and *solid* Substance, thro' which it also bores an infinite Number of *strait* Fibres from the very *Centre* of the Root, to *convey up* with it those Juices that are lodged *there*, with the *thicker* Parts of which it *nourishes* and *increases* its more *solid* Substance, thrusting forth the

the *thinner* towards the *Surface*, and the *thinnest* at the *Extremities* of its *Branches*; the former of which it *digests* into a *Bark* wherewithal it *clothes* the tender Body of its Plant, to *defend* it against the Violences of *Heat* and *Cold*; the *latter* into *Leaves*, and therewithal *adorns* its Branches, and *shelters* its Fruit from the *Scorching* of the Sun, and the excessive *Moisture* of the Rain; and by thus *distributing* the *still-rising* Juices, it still *increases* its Plant, till such time as it arrives to its *full* Growth and Maturity: So that from the *utmost Strings* of the *Root*, to the *Centre* of it, from the Centre of the Root to the *highest Branches* of it, from the Branches to the *Leaves* and *Fruit* of it, these *porous Fibres* run on, by which every part, how *distant* soever from the Root, *sucks up* its Juices and *digests* them into its own Substance; for even the *Leaves* and *Fruit* are hung upon the Branches by *little*, *soft* and *spongy* Stalks, thro' which there run innumerable *Fibres* that convey the *Juice* from the *Branches*, and by stupendous Art *distribute* it by their Pores, thro' all the whole Body of the Leaves and Fruit. But then by what *particular* Art the *Seminal Virtue* of each *particular* Kind doth so *constantly* and *regularly* concoct and elaborate the Juices of the Earth into their own *specifick* Smells and Tastes, and Figure and Colours, is a Mystery that *confounds* and *puzzles* all our Philosophy. Now whence I beseech you proceeds this *curious*, *inimitable* Art, which we with all our Reason can neither *transcribe* nor *comprehend*? Not from the *things themselves* sure; for how can they have *Art* that have no *Reason*? And therefore of Necessity it must proceed from some *all-wise*, *superintending* Mind that either immediately *contrives* and *frames* them, or else *impresses* their seminal Virtues with its own *all-wise* and *powerful* Art, whereby they *contrive* and *frame* themselves.

Vide Lessium de Prov.

And if in the Composure of every *Plant* there are such *visible* Footsteps of a *Divine Art*, how much more of every *Animal*, whose Parts for infinite *Variety*, delicate *Smallness*, exquisite *Shape*, *Position* and *Temper*, do as far excel the other, as the *Offices* for which they are designed? For tho the *plastick* Soul that forms the *Animal*, hath not the least Ray of *Art* or *Reason* of its own, yet in the *Formation* of it, it proceeds with as much *curious* and *incomparable* Art, as if it were endowed with the most *perfect* Reason. For first it spins out the *thicker* Parts of the *seminal Matter* into little *Threads* or *Fibres*, Part of which it hollows into *Pipes*, and part into *Sponges*, some whereof are more *thin*, and some more *solid*; all which, with wondrous Art, it *cuts* and *prunes* in divers Places, *fitting* their Ends to one another, and in divers Manners *knitting* them together into a *well-proportion'd* Structure of *Bones* and *Members*: Then of the *thinner* Parts of the Seminal Matter it forms the *Entrails*, *viz.* the *Liver* and *Heart* and *Brains*, drawing out from each certain *Fibres* to be framed into *Veins*, and *Arteries*, and *Nerves*; for which end it *bores* and *hollows* them thro', *extends* and *stretches* them out at length, and *divides* them into innumerable *Branches*, which it spreads thro' *all* the Entrails, and thereby maintains a mutual *Communication* between them, and derives the *Nourishment* and *Animal* and *Vital* Spirits thro' all the Body. And having thus *spun* the several Parts out of the seminal Matter, and curiously *woven* them together, it *concocts* the remainder of the Matter, which is still supplied with new Nourishment, into the *Substance* of those several Parts; and this in such *precise* and *regular* Proportions as to form *every* one of them, tho' infinitely *various* from one another, into its own *proper* Figure, and Measure, and Proportion, so that within seven Days after the Conception, the whole Body is entirely *framed* and *distinguished* into all its proper *Parts* and *Members*; which, tho they are so vastly great in their *Number*, so strangely different in their *Size* and *Figure*, so infinitely various in their *Motions*, and *Tendencies*, do all contribute one way or other to the *Beauty* and *Benefit* of the *Whole*: Some to propagate the *Kind*, others to preserve the *Individual*, others to distinguish what is *necessary*, *convenient*, and *pleasant*, from what is *dangerous*, *offensive*, or *destructive* to its Nature; some to *pursue* what is *good*, others to *shun* what is *evil*, others to *enjoy* those *goods*

goods, and others to *defend* it againſt thoſe *evils* that *threaten* or *invade* it: So that of all theſe infinitely *numerous* and *diverſe* Parts, not one can be *wanting* or *defective* without ſome conſiderable *Damage* to the *Whole*. How then is it conceivable that ſuch an infinite Number of *different* Animals, which are all ſo perfect in their *Kind*, ſo amazingly *curious* in their *Compoſition*, as that we with all our Reaſon can diſcern nothing in them that is either *ſuperfluous* or *defective*, nothing in their *Figure* that is *irregular*, nothing in their *Poſition* that is *miſplaced*, nothing in their *Motion* that is *exorbitant*, ſhould all of them be framed by their ſeveral *Plaſtick Souls*, which are utterly *blind* and *irrational*, without the *Conduct* and *Direction* of an *all-wiſe* and *all-powerful* Providence? Should you behold a *confuſed* Heap of Earth, and Stone, and Iron, and Timber, without any *viſible Artificer* near it, fall to *poliſhing* its own Parts, *fitting* them to one another, and *diſpoſing* them into Order according to the Rules of Architecture, and at length *frame* them all together into the Form of a moſt beautiful Palace; would you not conclude that ſome *skilful* Mind were *inviſibly* preſent there, and did *work* upon this *ſenſeleſs* Heap, and *diſpoſe* its Parts into this *comely* Order? And yet in the Compoſure of any one *Animal* there is infinitely *more* Art than in the moſt beautiful *Structure* in the World. How then can we imagine that the *blind*, *artleſs* Matter, of which it is compoſed, could ever have *framed* itſelf into this *admirable* Form and Contexture, had not ſome *great* Mind been *inviſibly* preſent at the Compoſition of it, or at leaſt imprinted on its *artleſs* Matter, ſome powerful Signature of its own *wiſe* Art to *direct*, and *order* and *contrive* it.

I might from hence have proceeded to the Formation of *Man*, the Maſter-piece of all this lower Creation, in whoſe *Frame* and *Structure* there are ſuch Miracles of Art as do out-reach both the *Imitation* and *Wonder* of the moſt *raiſed* and *comprehenſive* Minds. For who can ſufficiently admire the *skilful* Contexture of his *Corporeal* Parts, which tho almoſt infinite in *Number* and *Variety*, do not only compoſe a Body of a moſt amiable *Symmetry* and *Proportion*; but are alſo as exactly *framed* and *tempered* and *adapted* to perform the Offices of Life and Motion, and Senſe and Reaſon, as Art or Wit can *fanſy* or *imagine* them? But then how much more admirable is the *Soul* which *inhabits* and *animates* this Body; for of whatſoever Subſtance this Thing we call our Soul is, it is evidently framed for *great* and *noble* Operations, to *diſcloſe* the Myſteries of Nature, and to *dive* into its deep Philoſophy, to *penetrate* into the Cauſes of Things, and with its *nimble* and *ſagacious* Thoughts to *ſurvey* this ample Theatre of Beings; to *recollect* Things paſt, and to *foretel* Things to come, to invent the moſt uſeful Arts and comprehenſive Sciences, to *dictate* good Laws, and *project* wiſe Policies for the Government of Human Societies; and in a word, to *underſtand* the right Reaſons of Things, and to *regulate* its Will and Affections by them: And is it poſſible we ſhould imagine a Being thus *exquiſitely* framed to be the Product of a *blind* and *artleſs* Matter, to be nothing but a *lucky* Jumble of *ſenſeleſs* and *irrational* Atoms? For ſuppoſe it were nothing but *elaborated* Matter, yet certainly it requires infinite Art and Skill to *contrive* and *faſhion* it into all thoſe curious Springs, and Wheels and Mechanick Knacks that are neceſſary to render it not only a *living* and *feeling*, but alſo a *wiſe* and *rational* Matter. For how is it conceivable that a little Drop of Water, without the Aſſiſtance of any *Mind* or *Providence*, ſhould form it ſelf not only into all the Parts and Lineaments of a Human *Body*, but alſo into a Human *Mind*, a Mind of *vaſt* Deſires and *infinite* Capacities of Knowledge, that can form Ideas *within* itſelf of every Thing that is round *about* it, and from them can frame *innumerable* Propoſitions, and *deduce* them into Arts and Sciences; and in a word that can move *itſelf* and the Body it lives in, by its own *internal* Springs, and *form* itſelf into ſo many *various* and *contrary* Affections, by the myſterious *Force* and *Energy* of its own Reaſon and Diſcourſe? If you beheld a *dead* Pencil move without any *viſible* Hand, and *dip* itſelf into *various* Colours, and *draw* but an exact Picture of a

Man, you would doubtless conclude either that some *invisible* Limner, had *infused* into it the Art of Limning, or did immediately *manage* and *direct* it. But should you find this Picture, when it is *drawn* and *finished*, not only *live* and *move*, but *reason* and *discourse*, and exert all Sorts of *Animal* and *Human* Operations, could you imagine that ever the *blind*, *irrational* Pencil formed it of *itself*, without being *managed* or *directed* by some *superior* Mind or Providence?

And thus I have given some brief Instances of the constant Direction of all sorts of Things, how *stupid* and *irrational* soever, to some *wise* and *good* End; which is a plain *Evidence* of an *universal Providence* over the World, that in a *constant* and *uniform* Series directs Things to their proper *Ends* that have no *Aim* or *Design* of their own, and so are utterly uncapable to *guide* and *direct* themselves.

II. Another *sensible Evidence* of a *divine Providence* is, the *sagacious Providence* of Things that have no *Foresight* in themselves. For among irrational Beings, that can neither apprehend *for* what *Ends* they act, nor by what *Means* they may best effect them, how strange is it to consider with what *Insight* and *Providence* they many of them act in *storing up* Provisions for themselves against a time of Extremity, in *framing* their own Beds and Nests, and *defending* themselves and their Young against approaching Dangers; in *educating* their Young, and propagating their Kind thro' all succeeding Generations; insomuch that if they were every one endued with Reason of their own to *foresee* their own Dangers, and *forecast* their own Conveniency and Safety, they could not act with more *Skill* and *Sagacity* than they do. For thus the *Plants* that have neither *Sense* nor *Reason* to discern the Periods of their own Growth and Decay, when they have almost spent themselves, and are ready to *wither* and *die*, run up into Seed, as if they *foresaw* their own *approaching* Fate, and did thereupon *bethink* themselves of *propagating* their Kind before it be *too late*, and leaving a numerous *Posterity* behind them. And therefore since they have neither Thought nor Forecast *in themselves*, 'tis evident that there is a Providence that *thinks* and *forecasts* for them.

Thus also those Plants that shoot up on *high*, but are too *weak* to support themselves, such as the *Hop* and *Vine* and *Ivy*, run out into little *Strings* or *Tendrils*, with which they *lay hold* upon some Body that is *stronger* than themselves; as if they were *conscious* of their own Weakness, and so to *prop up* themselves did *designedly* twist about those stronger Bodies, that are best able to *support* them. And therefore since they neither know their own *Weakness*, nor yet the *Strength* of the *Trees* or *Wall* they depend on, it is evident that there is a wise Providence that knows *both*, and *guides* and *directs* them to their Safety.

And as there is a visible Providence over *Plants*, so there is also over *brute* and *irrational* Animals, and especially over the *smallest* and most *contemptible*, who by reason of their Natural *Weakness* and *Impotence* are less able to provide for themselves. For thus the Spider is a Creature as void of *Reason* as the Plant of *Sense*, and yet with what *wondrous* Art doth he spin his Web out of a *viscous* Matter within his own Bowels? He *extends* the Threads of it a-cross to one another, leaving equal Angels in the Middle, *fastening* the extreme to the opposite Threads; and then lest thro' the Weakness of the slender Threads of which it is composed, the Fly he hunts should happen to break thro', he weaves several *Under-nets* one within another, and with a wondrous Art *fastens* them altogether, that so if *one* should fail, the *other* might hold: And when he hath thus fix'd and spread his *subtle* and *strange* contriv'd Snares, he lies in wait in a little Den without, made by him on purpose to *conceal* himself; from whence, as soon as the Fly is *entangled*, he swiftly *runs* and *seizes* it, and having *killed* it, carries it away and lays it up in a safe Repository against a Time of Famine: In all which Performance this *irrational* Insect proceeds as *providently* and *wisely*, as if in a long Deduction

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he had inferr'd one thing from another, and acted upon the most *rational* Deliberation; and therefore since he is void of Reason *himself*, and doth not determine himself by any natural Logick of *his own*, he must proceed by the Reason and Direction of some *wise* Mind *without* him, that hath the *guidance* and *disposal* of his Motion. For he begins not to exercise his Art after he is arriv'd to a *riper* Age, but is *born* with his Trade about him, and *spins* and *weaves* from his very Infancy; nor is there any *diversity* in his Manufacture, as there uses to be in those of *rational* Artificers, but 'tis always woven in the same *manner*, and *figure*, and *fashion*; which is a plain Evidence that he effects it not by any *Art* or *Reason* of *his own*, but by mere *natural Instinct*, which is nothing but the *Impression* of the Art and Reason of the *Author* of Nature, which Impression knows not what it *doth*, nor upon what *Reasons* it proceeds, but only *answers* to the *Reason* of God, as the *Signature* doth to the *Seal* that impress'd it, and like an Echo *articulates* and *resounds* his Voice without *understanding* what it *means*. And as the *senseless* Echo, when it *reverberates* Words that carry *Sense* and *Reason* in them, supposes the original Voice to proceed from some *intelligent* Mind; so these *irrational* Instincts of Nature, which express so much *Art* and *Reason* in their Operations, do necessarily imply, that there is some *wise* Mind or Providence to which they owe their *original* and *continuance*.

For thus, to instance farther, with what a *strange* and *wonderful* Art do the *Bees* frame their *Combs*, which they divide on each Side into a world of little *six corner'd* Cells, and then prop them up with *middle* Walls of Pillars which they raise from the Floor into an Arch; by which as they are rendred more *strong*, so the Bees have an entrance thro' to *repair* them whenever they *decay*? And having thus artificially *built* their Houses, with what *industry* do they wander to and fro to gather the sweet Dews of Heaven, whereon they live, from the *Herbs* and *Flowers* of the Field? And with what Care do they *treasure* them up in those little Cells against *Winter*, when they can neither go *forth* by reason of the *cold* to *seek* their Sustenance abroad, nor yet *find* it if they *could*? And when they have fill'd their Cells with their Winter Provision, *they providently* draw over the Mouth of them a thin Skin or Membrane to *preserve* the grateful Liquor lest it should *drop out* and be *lost*: And in a word, in what a regular Order do they *live*? They *rest* and *labour* all together, and in the Discharge of *several* Offices conspire to the *same* work: Some *press* the Flowers with their Feet, others with their Mouths, or the Down of their Bodies, gather up the Moistures which these *press out*, and carry them home to their Cells; some bring home the *Materials* of which these Cells are composed, others *disburthen* them of it, others *build* with it, and others *plane* and *polish* the Building. Thus all Hands are at work, first to *build* the House they are to dwell in, and to *divide* it into its several Apartments, and then to *store* them all with Provision against the ensuing Time of Scarcity. Now therefore (not to mention their wondrous *Polity* and *Government* of which so many curious Observations have been made) how is it possible they should do all these Things with so much *regularity* and exact *order*, without being guided by some *Art* and *Reason*? But yet 'tis certain 'tis not by any Reason of *their own*; they do not at all *consider*, when they build, how needful Houses are for themselves and their Winter Provisions, nor how *convenient* that waxy Matter which they gather is to build *those* Houses; nor what Necessity there is of dividing them into *distinct* Cells and Apartments; they *understand* not the Nature of those sweet Dews which they gather, whether they are *Food* or *Poison*; and when they gather more than they have present need of, they *know* not why they do it; they *reason* not with themselves that Winter is approaching, wherein neither these *Dews* will *fall* upon which they live, nor themselves be able to go forth and *gather* them, and that therefore it behoves them to *store* themselves before-hand against the *ensuing* Famine; and when that they have laid up their Store, and are binding it in with the Mem-

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brane they draw over it, they do not consider that 'tis a *fluid* Matter, that will be apt to *run out* and be *lost* : And yet all these Things they *perform* with as much *Regularity* and *Art*, as if they had thorowly *weigh'd* and *consider'd*, and perfectly *understood* the Reasons of them ; which is a plain Evidence that they are acted by a Reason that is not *their own* ; and what *other* Reason can this be, than that of the *divine* Mind, which *governs* and *disposes* all Things ? And the same may be said of *Ants*, and *Moles*, and *Palmer-worms*, and innumerable other Animals, which tho they have no Reason of *their own*, are yet in many Instances as evidently conducted by *Reason* as any *rational* Beings whatever.

For with what *admirable* Art do the *irrational* Birds form their *nests* a little after their *coupling* ? They begin to *build* tho they neither *consider* that they are *breeding*, nor yet do *foresee* when then shall *lay* : By which it's plain that there is a Providence which *considers* and *foresees* for them : And tho they understand not what Materials are *fittest* to build their Nests, nor in what Order to *frame* and *dispose* them, yet there is a very *wise* Understanding that *directs* them both to *choose* and *contrive* the Materials, and this with greater *Art* than we with all our *Reason* can do. For as for the *outward* Surface of the Nests, which comes not near their Bodies, they frame it with *sticks* and *thorns*, which with *inimitable* Art they *twist* and *interweave* into a *round* and *uniform* hollowness, which they commonly dawb round with Mud to render it more *compact* and *warm* ; when this is done, tho they *understand* not their own *specifick* Frame and Constitution, yet they proceed as if they *did*, and suit their Nests to the *strength* or *weakness* of their Natures ; for those of them that are of a *hardier* Make content themselves with this *inward* plaistering, and when 'tis dried proceed to *lay* and *hatch* their Eggs on it, without troubling themselves to *line* it with any *softer* Materials, as if they knew *beforehand* that the Constitution of their Young would be such as would not need any *softness* or *delicacy* ; whereas those that are of a *tenderer* Frame take care to clothe the *hard* Plaistering with *straw* or *hay* or *moss*, upon which those that are *tenderest* of all make another Layer of *hair* or *down* or *feathers*, as if they perfectly *understood* what Degree of *softness* and *warmth* would be necessary for the Preservation and Nourishment of their tender Offspring. Since therefore it's certain that they *know* none of all these Things, and yet they act as if they *did*, they must necessarily be supposed to act by the *direction* of some *wise* Mind that perfectly knows them all. And then again, considering with what *patience* and *diligence* the Female sits upon her Eggs when she hath *laid* them, as if she *understood* the Philosophy of her own *warmth*, how necessary it is to *form*, *animate* and *hatch* them ; and with what *care* and *industry* the Male brings in her Provision whilst she is *sitting*, that so she may not be forced by the Necessities of Nature to *neglect* their Eggs, and *leave* them too long exposed to the cold *Air*, which in a short time would destroy the *tender* Principles of Life *within* them ; and in a word, with what *care* and *industry* they both conspire to *cherish* and *feed* their Young when they are *hatch'd*, till such time as they are *cloth'd* and *fledg'd*, and can fly abroad to seek Provision for themselves ; considering, I say, how in all these Things they proceed as if they perfectly *understood* the *reasons* and *necessities* of their own Actions, 'tis plain that they must be *guided* either by a Reason in *their own*, or in some *other* Mind, that hath the *command* and *conduct* of their Motions. Now that it is not by a Reason of *their own* is evident, because whatsoever they do, they *necessarily* do, and cannot possibly do *otherwise* ; for they never *vary* in their Operations, never try any *new* Experiments, but always proceed in the *same* Road, and *repeat* the same Things in the *same* Method, which is a plain Sign that they cannot do *otherwise*, and consequently that they act not from *Reason* but *Necessity* ; and therefore, since they are *made* and *impelled* to act as they *do*, and yet do act so *rationally* and *wisely*, that which *impels* them must be a *rational* Mind either acting upon them *immediately*, or by a *fix'd* and permanent Impression of its *Art* and *Rea-*

ſon on their Motions: For, as *Ariſtotle* hath long ſince obſerv'd, ὔτε τέχνῃ ὔτε ζητήσαντα ὔτε βυλευσάμενα ποιεῖ, *they do theſe Things neither by any Art, nor Counſel, nor Deliberation of their own:* They are not *Maſters* of the Wiſdom *by* which they act, but are merely *paſſive* to the Impreſſions of that Wiſdom that are made *upon* them; for ſo Men, we ſee, for their own *Profit* and *others* Pleaſure, can teach Dogs and other Animals to *dance* the *Meaſures* of *Tunes*, and other *artificial* Motions, the *Rules* and *Ends* of which they underſtand not; for when they perform *theſe* Motions, they neither *think* of their Maſter's *Profit* nor the Spectator's *Pleaſure*, which is the *End* and *Deſign* of them, nor underſtand the *Proportions* of *Muſick*, which is the *Rule* of them: So that the Reaſon of their Motions is only in their Teacher's Mind, who, by frequent *Uſe*, doth, by Degrees, *imprint* the Practice of his Art upon their *Fancies*; and if a *Man* can ſo imprint his Art upon theſe *artleſs* Creatures, as to make them practiſe it *without* underſtanding either the *Grounds* or *Reaſons* of it, how much more may an *All-wiſe* and *Almighty* Mind? And therefore, ſince *de facto* we behold a World of *curious* Art among Brute-Animals, that far exceeds all the *little* Feats we can teach them, why may we not as reaſonably believe, that any one of theſe *dancing* Animals learn'd all his *artificial* Motions, the Reaſon of which he *underſtands* not, without any *Arts-maſter* to teach him, as that *Ants* and *Bees* acquir'd all the *Art* and *Providence* they practiſe, without either diſcovering the Reaſons of it by any Underſtanding of *their own*, or being ever *inſtructed* in it by any *other* provident Mind? for *Art* and *Providence* cannot be ſuppos'd without *Reaſon*, and therefore ſince the *Reaſon* of their Art is not in *themſelves*, it muſt neceſſarily be in *ſome* Mind *without* them, that hath the *Conduct* and *Direction* of all their Motions.

III. Another *ſenſible Evidence* of a divine *Providence*, is the mutual *Agreement* and *Correſpondency* of Things that have no Underſtanding of *themſelves*, or of *one another*: For if we look abroad into the World, we cannot but obſerve an admirable *Harmony* among Things which yet have no Kind of *Knowledge* of *one another*, and therefore cannot be ſuppos'd to have *framed* and *adapted* themſelves to one another; nor yet to be ſo framed and adapted, but by the Art and Contrivance of ſome very *wiſe* and *intelligent* Mind. For how can any Cauſe *fit* any *two* Things to *one another*, without having ſome Idea in his Mind of the Natures of them *both*? If therefore, in the Nature of Things we can diſcover a World of *mutual* Suitabilities of *this* to *that*, and of *one* Thing to *another*, it will be a ſufficient Argument that they *all* proceed from ſome *wiſe* Cauſe that had an *univerſal* Idea of their Natures in his Mind, and *ſaw* how *ſuch* a Thing would ſuit *ſuch* a Thing, before ever he *actually* adapted them one to another.

Now, not to inſiſt any farther upon the admirable Fitneſs of the *Sun* and *Earth*, the *Water* and *Earth*, the *Air* and *Heaven* and *Earth* one to another, which I have largely diſcourſed already, how exactly is every *Animal* fitted for its *Element*, and every *Element* for its *Animals*? Thus the *Birds*, for Inſtance, are fitted with *Wings* to fly aloft in the *Air*, and the *Air is* fitted to bear them up, and to yield to the *Vibration* of their *Wings*: The *Fiſhes* are fitted to ſwim in the *Water*, having *Fins*, which ſerve inſtead of *Oars*, to cut thro' and divide the Streams, and the *Waters* are fitted for the *Fiſh* to ſwim in, being a *ſoft* and *fluid* Subſtance that is eaſily *cut* and *divided*; and as for the *Earth*, and thoſe *earthy* Animals that inhabit it, there is an *admirable* Congruity between them; for they being all fram'd to *walk* or *creep*, muſt have an *hard* and ſolid Matter to move on, and the *Earth* being an hard and ſolid Matter, requires ſuch *Animals* as can *walk* or *creep* on it: And as every *Element* is fitted for the Motion of its *Animals*, and every *Animal* to move in its *Element*; ſo every Element hath a *Food* that is proper to the *Appetites* of its *Animals*, and every *Animal* an *Appetite* that is proper to the *Food* of its Element: So that as every *Animal* is fitted within with all thoſe *Faculties* and *Organs* that are requiſite to its *procuring* and *enjoying* what is *good* for it, and its *ſhunning* and *repelling* what is *hurtful*; ſo it is alſo furniſh'd *without*, with all that is *neceſſary* or *convenient* for its *Support* and

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Satisfaction. Thus every Faculty *within* hath an *Object* without prepar'd for it, that is exactly *correspondent* therewith, without which, as hath been excellently observ'd, the *Faculty* would become *vain* and *useless*, yea, and sometimes *harmful* and *destructive*; as reciprocally the *Object* would import *little* or *nothing*, if such a Faculty were not *provided for* and *suited* to it. For thus the *Eye* would be perfectly *useless*, if it were not for the *Light*, and the *Light* would be much *less considerable* if it were not for the *Eye*; for if all *Light* were extinguish'd, all those *curious* Colours into which the Light is *refracted*, would be utterly *insignificant*; and if all those *Colours* were extinguished, the *Eye* would be utterly depriv'd of one of its most *pleasant* Entertainments. And what Use would there be of all that infinite Variety of *melodious* Sounds, *fragrant* Odours, and *delicious* Savours which this Frame of Nature affords, were there no *hearing*, *smelling* or *tasting* Faculties? and, What would these *Faculties* signify, were there no such *Sounds*, or *Odours*, or *Savours*? So that these *Objects* and *Faculties* are all as *perfectly* fitted one to another, as *it* was *possible* for *Art* to fit them: Nothing could be better fitted for *seeing* than the *Eye*; nothing better framed, to render Things *visible*, than the *Light*, and *Light* can be refracted into no Colour so *grateful* unto the Eye as *green*, which is the great Colour of Nature; and the same may be said of the *Ear* and *Sounds*, the *Smell* and *Odours*, the *Taste* and *Savours*. And if the *Eye* were made to *see*, and the *Ear* to *hear*, as there is no doubt but they *were*, being so exquisitely fram'd for that purpose, to be sure *Light* was made for *seeing*, and *Sounds* for *hearing*, and so for all the rest: And how is it possible that so many Things should be made so exactly *harmonious* and *agreeable* with one another, without the powerful *Art* and *Direction* of some very skilful Mind, that knew before-hand, that *this* Thing would perfectly fit *that*, and consequently had a perfect *Idea* of them both? When, therefore, we behold such exact Correspondencies between the *motive* Faculties of Animals, aand the *Elements* they move in, between the *Fruits* and *Products* of those Elements, and the Faculties of *Taste*, *Digestion*, and *Nutrition*, in those Animals that inhabit them; and, in a word, between all *sensible* Objects *without*, and *sensitive* Objects *within*, how is it possible we should be so senseless, as not to trace out an *all-directing* Wisdom by Foot-steps that are so *express* and *remarkable*? For, suppose you heard a musical Instrument move its own Strings into an *exquisite* Harmony, and run long Divisions of *curious* and *well-proportion'd* Notes, without the Impulse of any *visible* Artist, would you not conclude, either that some *invisible* Hand did immediately *touch* and *play* upon its Strings, or that they were mov'd by some *internal* Spring and Contrivance of a musical Mind? how then can we attend to the *admirable* Harmonies of Nature, to the *natural* References and *due* Proportions and *exact* Correspondencies of all its innumerable Parts to one another, without believing that there is some great *harmonical* Mind which *tun'd* it at first, and still *plays* upon it by the immediate *Touch* and *Impulse* of its own *invisible* Hand.

And as all Things are thus *fitted* and *adapted* together, so are they also most regularly *subordinated* to one another, according to their *Rank* and *Worth*; the *senseless* Elements, with all their *Fruit* and *Product*, being subject to the Use of *Animals*, to whom they afford a vast *Variety* of all Conveniences and Necessaries answerable to their *Desires* and *Needs*; so that of all those vast Numbers of *sensitive* Beings, there is no one *Kind* or *Individual*, no, not so much as a *Fly*, or *Worm*, or *Insect*, but what is plentifully supplied out of these common *Storehouses* of Nature. And as the *Elements* are subjected to the Use of *Animals*, so both are subject to the Use of *Man*, who is as much superior to the Brute-Animals, as they are to the senseless Elements. To him therefore, as it is most *fit* and *congruous*, all Things here below pay tribute; the Earth ingenders within its Bowels Quarries of *Stone* and *Mines* of *Coal* and *Metals* to serve his necessary Uses and Conveniences, and spreads its Surface with a vast Variety of *Herbs* and *Flowers* and fruitful *Trees* to supply him with *Food* and with *Physick*, and treat him with *pleasure* and *delight*, to entertain his *Eye* with beautiful *colours*, his

his *ſmell* with fragant *odours*, and his *palate* with delicious *ſavours*; the Waters ſerve to quench his *thirſt*, to dreſs his *food*, to fructify his *fields* and *gardens*, to cleanſe his *Body* and *habitation*, and to maintain and facilitate his *intercourſe* and *traffick* with all Parts of the World; the Air *fans* him with refreſhing *gales*, ſupplies him with *breath*, and with *vital* and *animal* Spirits; the Fire *warms* and *cheriſhes* him, *concocts* his Meat and Drink into *fit* and *wholeſom* Nouriſhment, and ſerves him in his moſt *neceſſary* Arts and *manual* Operations. And as all the four *elements* do one way or other conſpire to *our* Uſe and Benefit, ſo do all the *Animals* too that inhabit them, tho as yet there are *ſundry* of them whoſe uſe we have not *diſcovered*, but as for the *generality* of them they are innumerable ways adapted to our uſe; ſome to furniſh our Table with *food* and *delicacies*, others to *prevent* or to *remove* our Diſeaſes with their *medicinal* Virtues; ſome to *clothe*, and ſome to *adorn* our Bodies, others to *aſſiſt* us in, and others to *eaſe us* of our Labours, and others to *entertain* us with chearful *ſports* and *recreations*. Thus all Things here *below* have as plain a *reference* to the Uſe of Man who is the *nobleſt* Part of them, as if ſome *wiſe* and *powerful* Mind had contriv'd *them* on purpoſe to *ſerve* and *benefit* him; as on the contrary *Man* hath ſo plain a reference to *them*, conſidering his *needs* and his *ſenſitive* and *rational* Faculties, as if the ſame wiſe Mind had fram'd *him* on purpoſe to *uſe* and *enjoy* them.

And is it poſſible that after all this we ſhould be ſo *ſtupid* as not to *diſcern* thoſe bright Beams of *Wiſdom* which ſhine thro' ſo many *perſpicuous* Correſpondencies? For it's certain that either they muſt be *deſigned* by *Wiſdom*, or *happen* by *Chance*; and is it poſſible that a *blind Chance* which can do nothing *regularly*, and is the Parent only of *monſtrous* and *deform'd* Births, ſhould thus exquiſitely *fit* and *adapt* things to one another in ſuch a *long* and *orderly* Series? that Chance, which never yet compos'd a *tune* or wrote a *line* of coherent *ſenſe* ſhould ever be the Author of this great Frame of Things, in which there is more of *harmony* than in all the *muſical* Compoſures, and more of *Senſe* and *Philoſophy* than in all the *ſtudied* Volumes in the World? And if it can't be the Effect of Chance, it muſt be the Product of *Wiſdom* and *Providence*.

IV. Another *ſenſible evidence* of a divine *Providence*, is, the *continuation* of Things in the ſame comely Order which have no *government* of themſelves. That Things are put into a moſt *uſeful*, *wiſe* and *artificial* Order hath been ſufficiently demonſtrated under the foregoing Particulars; now I would fain know *what* was it reduced them *to*, and ſtill continues them *in* this Order? Did the *blind* Parts of the *matter* whereof theſe Things are compoſed, *once upon a time* as they were wandring thro' the *field* of *infinite ſpace beckon* to one another, and by *common conſent* aſſemble themſelves into a *General Council*, and there *adviſe* together how they ſhould *rank* and *marſhal* themſelves into a World, and when upon *grave* and *mature* Advice they had *agreed* upon, and *deſcrib'd* and *chalk'd* out the *laws* of their *Motion*, did they *break up* Council, and *ſet forth* in their ſeveral *lines* to the Execution of their *Canons* and *Decrees*, till by their *oblique*, *parallel* and *counter-motions*, they at laſt interwove themſelves into all thoſe *beautiful contextures* we behold? He who can imagine this to be either *probable* or *poſſible*, muſt himſelf be as *dull* and *ſtupid* as thoſe ſenſeleſs Parts of *matter* are, of which he *dreams*. Well then, ſince theſe Things could not be effected by any Counſel or Contrivance in the matter *itſelf*, was it by mere *chance* that theſe blind Parts of Matter *floating* in an immenſe ſpace, did, after ſeveral *juſtlings* and *rencounters*, jumble themſelves into this beautiful Frame of Things? Alas, this is a Conceit, if poſſible, more *ridiculous* than the former; for how is it poſſible to imagine that *Chance* ſhould ever make a *Man* in the contexture of whoſe Parts there are ſuch *Wonders* of Art, as do as far *exceed* the moſt *curious* Engines and Machines that ever human Art *invented*, as the moſt *glorious* and *magnificent* Palace doth a Caſtle of *Cards*? And if *Chance* cannot ſo much as draw the Picture of a Man, which is but a *rude Imitation* of his *outſide*; how much leſs can it ſhape, temper, and connect

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all thoſe *hidden* and *ſubtile* Springs of *life* and *motion*, *ſenſe* and *imagination*, *memory* and *paſſion* within him? Well then, ſince it was neither from any *wiſdom* in the *matter* of them, nor from any caſual *motion* of that Matter, that this orderly Series of Things did proceed, was it from a *blind neceſſity*? But pray what *made* this Neceſſity? how came the *matter* of theſe things that might have moved *otherwiſe*, having an infinite ſpace *about* it, and no Principle *within* it to incline it *one* way more than *another*, to determine it ſelf to *this* Series of Motion? If you ſay it was by *Chance*, I have ſhew'd it is *impoſſible*; and if you ſay it was from *Eternity*, that is all one. For as an excellent Author of our own hath obſerv'd, whether it were now, or yeſterday, or from Eternity, infers no difference as to *our* purpoſe, not the *circumſtance* of the *time*, but the *quality* of the *cauſe* being only here conſiderable; the ſame cauſe being alike *apt* or *unapt yeſterday* as *to day*, *always* as *ſometimes*, from *all Eternity* as from any *ſet time* to produce ſuch effects. So that 'tis as *poſſible* for Matter fortuitouſly *moved*, without any Art or Counſel, to compoſe a World *now*, and to frame it into *Animals* and *Men*, as it was *from Eternity*; that is, 'tis *from all Eternity*, and *now* equally impoſſible: and if it were by the Counſel of ſome *intelligent Mind*, that it was *fram'd* into this *World* of Beings and orderly Series of Things, then it is doubtleſs by the ſame Mind that its order and harmony is ſtill *continued* and *preſerved*. For it is altogether as impoſſible for Matter of itſelf, *unguided* by Wiſdom and Art, to *purſue* any *conſtant* Courſe, as to *fall into* any *regular form*, it being as we ſee all *torn* and *broken* into little Parts innumerably *many*, and infinitely *diverſe* in their *ſize*, and *figures* and *motions*, and thence only fit in their ſeveral courſes to *croſs* and *confound* each other. How then is it poſſible without *vaſt* Wiſdom and *anſwerable* Power ſo to manage this *wild* and *diſorder'd* Swarm of Atoms, as to determine them to their proper *bounds*, continue them in their regular *ranks* and *files*, and preſerve them in the ſame *tenure* of Action, ſo as that in all thoſe new productions of the *individuals* of every *kind* of *Plants* and *Animals* which are every Day compounded out of them, they ſhould none of them ever *extravagate* in their Motions ſo as to *diſturb* and *hinder* one another, and finally *diſorder* and *interrupt* the natural Courſe of Generation? When therefore we conſider how this great *Machine* of the World (as the above-cited Author expreſſeth it) whoſe Parts are infinite for *number* and *variety*, hath ſtood ſix thouſand Years together, always *one* and the *ſame*, *unimpair'd* in its beauty, *unworn* in its Parts, *unwearied* and *undiſturbed* in its *motions*; thro' what an *infinite* Series of *generations* and *corruptions* all its *plants* and *animals* have paſs'd; and yet how after they have been *corrupted* over and over, and their whole Frames have been *broke* in pieces, and all their Parts *divided* and *diſperſed*, they have ſtill been generated *anew*, and *rallied* into the ſame *ſpecifick* Natures, which, tho they ſtill conſiſt of *numberleſs* Parts, are conſtantly drawn up into the *ſame* Poſtures and Figures and Poſitions, and with ſtrange *regularity* digeſted into the ſame *handſome* order, as if they all *kept time* with the *muſical* Laws of ſome Almighty Mind, as the Stones of *Thebes* did with *Amphion*'s Lute, and thereby continually *danc'd* into their natural *figures*. When, I ſay, we conſider theſe *ſtrange* and *wondrous* Things, what tolerable Account can we give of the Performance of them without an *over-ruling* Providence? For, how is it imaginable that in a ſix thouſand Years Courſe of Generations and Corruptions theſe *blind* and *undeſigning* Parts of Matter, which by reaſon of their infinite *diverſity* are ſo naturally apt to *thwart* and *diſturb* one another, ſhould maintain ſuch *regular* Courſes of Motion as ſtill to *concenter* in the ſame Forms, ſo as that thro' all this vaſt Tract of Time, not ſo much as one kind *of plants* or *animals* ſhould *miſcarry*? How, I ſay, could this have been, had they not all along been conducted by a *ſteady unerring* Providence?

V. Another *ſenſible evidence* of a Divine *Providence*, is the *miraculous events* that have happen'd in the World. By miraculous Events, I mean ſuch as either for their *matter* or *manner* of production, do exceed the Power of *natural*

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causes, or at least are produc'd by them out of their establish'd *course* and *order*: Such as *dividing the Sea, stopping the Sun, raising the Dead, curing the sick, and blind, and lame*, with a *touch* or *word*; of all which, we have notorious Instances both in the *old* and *new* Testament, and these attested with as *full* and *convincing* Evidence as ever any Matters of Fact were that are recorded in History. For, as for the Miracles of the *Old Testament*, besides that they were sundry of them *performed* in the publick View of Nations, and were *recorded* in those very Ages wherein they were wrought, and so could have been easily *disproved* by ten thousand *living* Witnesses, had they not been *true*; besides, that they were attested by the most *antient* Heathen Poets and Historians in their *Mythologies* and *Histories*; who, to be sure, would never have yielded the Glory of such wondrous Effects to a Nation whom they *hated* and *despised*, had they not been forced to it by *undeniable* Evidence: In a word, besides that they were *confirm'd* by the succeeding Prophets of that Nation, who both by the Miracles they wrought, and by the exact Accomplishment of their Predictions, have sufficiently *evidenc'd* themselves to be *supernaturally* inspir'd; besides all which, I say, the Miracles of the *Old Testament* are abundantly *attested* by the *New*, the Credit whereof is *ratified* and *confirm'd* by a World of *new* Miracles wrought by our Saviour himself, and particularly by his *Resurrection from the Dead*, which are not only *in part* confessed by the *Jews* themselves, his most *mortal* Enemies, and by the *Heathen* Writers, who were *implacable* Persecutors of his Religion, but also by his own *Disciples*, and *Apostles*, who, as I shall shew hereafter, were *Eye-witnesses* of these Miracles, and did not only *attest* them with their *Mouths*, but also *sealed* their Testimony with their Blood, and *confirmed* it before all the World with infinite *other* Miracles which they wrought in his Name, and which they *continued* to work for several Ages together; as is evident not only from the *wondrous* Success of their *Ministry*, which without being attested with *such* miraculous Effects could never have propagated in so *short* a time such a *hated* Religion over all the World, but also from the confident *Appeals* which the *Christian* Writers frequently make to their *Heathen* Enemies, in which they *Subpœna* them *in* as daily *Spectators* of their wondrous Works, and for the *truth* of them, *challenge* their own *Eyes* and *Ears*. So then, that there have been such *miraculous Effects*, can no more be *doubted* than that there have been such Men as *Pompey the Great*, or *Julius Cæsar*, the *former* being attested, all things considered, with much *more* Evidence than the *latter*.

And if this Attestation be *true*, there *must* be a Providence; for how is it possible that *blind* Nature, which neither *deliberates* nor *chooses*, should of itself ever *vary* or *interrupt* its course, without rushing into utter *confusion* and *disorder*? How should any *part* of it, when 'tis *once* moved either *faster* or *slower* than ordinary, so *restrain* or *quicken* its own Motion as to reduce itself back again to its *Established* Course? For, if it once move *faster*, it must have some Degree of Motion *superadded* to it, and till that is withdrawn it must move *faster* for ever: If it move *slower*, it must have some Degree of Motion *withdrawn* from it, and till that be restored it must move *slower for* ever: How then is it possible that *Nature*, or any *part* of it which moves by a *blind* Necessity, should of its own accord either *hasten* and then *slacken*, or *slacken* and then *hasten* the Course of its Motion, as it must do in the Production of *miraculous* Effects, without being influenc'd by an *Almighty* Providence? We have several miraculous Instances of the *diverting* natural Causes *from* their Course, and *stopping* them *in* it; such as causing the Waters to *divide* and *stand still*, and the Sun to move *backward*. Now, how is it conceivable that any *natural* Cause that hath no *will* of its own to *move* and *determine* it, should either *stop* its own motion and then *move* again, or *divert* from its Course and then *return* again, if it were not under the Command of some Will *without* it, that *guides* and *disposes* it according to its own Counsel? But besides these *Scripture* Miracles, there are sundry *miraculous* Instances of the *rewarding* good Men and

punishing bad, publickly recorded in the Histories of all *Ages*; some of *vindicating* the *Innocence*, others of *restoring* the *Lives*, others of *relieving* the *Necessities* of good Men; some of *detecting* the *Crimes* of bad Men, others of striking them dead in their *impious* Facts, others of punishing them *in kind*, and others of *inflicting* on them those very Plagues which they have *imprecated* on themselves to give *credit* to a *falshood*; of some or other of which, there is scarce any Age in the World which hath not been furnished with sundry *notorious* Instances: So that unless we will give the *Lye* to all *human* Testimony, and condemn the Records of all Ages for publick *Cheats* and *Impostures*, we cannot deny but that there have been sundry Miracles in the World; and if of all these Miracles, that have been so *strongly* attested, there be but any one *true* and *real*, that *one* is a *sufficient* Argument of an *over-ruling* Providence. For, if *ever* any thing hath been effected that is either *above* the Power, or *contrary* to the established Course of natural Causes, it must be brought to pass by the Power of *God*; and if God doth *sometimes* visibly exert his own *immediate* Efficacy on this World, this is a plain Evidence that he *always* governs it: For whenever he *thus* exerts it, it is for *some* reason to be sure, and for *what* other reason should he thus strip his Arm, and *visibly* exert his Power *upon* or *before* us, but either to *awaken* our *attention*, or to *confirm* our *faith*, or *alarm* our *fear*, or *encourage* our *hope*? And if *ever* he had any *such* Design upon us, it must be in order to his *governing* us; for to what other purpose can an *Almighty* Being be supposed to address himself to *our* Hope and Fear, and Faith and Attention, but to *subdue* and *reduce* us under his Rule and Government?

VI. And lastly, another *visible Evidence* of a *divine* Providence, is *Predictions* of *future* and *remote* Contingencies. That there *have* been such Things, hath been *universally* acknowledged by *Heathens* as well as *Jews* and *Christians*. As for the Heathens, *Tully* gives numerous Instances of it in his two Books of *Divination*; in the first of which, he sets down this as the *great* Principle of Prediction: *Esse Deos, & eorum providentiâ mundum administrari, eosdemque consulere rebus humanis, nec solum universis, verum etiam singulis*, i. e. *That there are Gods, and that by their Providence the World is governed, that they take care of human Affairs, and this not only in general, but in particular.* And of these Predictions he tells, there was one *Chrysippus* who wrote a large Book, in which he gives *innumerable* Instances of them, *all* confirmed by very *good* Authority. Besides which, there were their *Oracles* and their *Sibylline Writings*, among which, if there had not been a great many true Predictions, it is not to be imagined that ever the *wiser* and more *inquisitive* Part of Men should be so far imposed on as they were to pay such a mighty *respect* and *veneration* to them, and that not only for a *little while*, but for several *Ages* together. But as for their *Oracles*, there are sundry of them *recorded* in antient Historians, together with their *punctual* Accomplishments; and *Tully* in particular, tells us of one of *Apollo* his Oracles, which foretold a thousand Years before, that *Sypselus* the Tyrant should reign at *Corinth*. And *Varro* makes mention of one *Vectius Valens*, an *Augur* in the time of *Romulus*, who when *Rome* was building, foretold by the flying of *twelve Vultures*, that the *City* should continue a thousand two hundred Years, which accordingly happen'd. But as for the *reality* of Predictions, we need seek no farther than the Holy Scriptures, in which you have sundry *Prophecies* of things which happen'd a long time *after*, as particularly of the Deliverance of the *Jews* from those *two* Captivities, the one in *Egypt*, the other in *Babylon*; the former of which was foretold four hundred Years, and the *latter* above seventy Years before it came to pass; and yet both of them accomplished *punctually* to a Day, as you may see in *Gen.* 15. 13, compared with *Exod.* 12. 41. and *Jer.* 25. 12. compared with 2 *Chron.* 36. 21, 22. which *latter* Prophecy is not only recorded in Scripture, but mentioned by *Eupolemus*, an Heathen Historian, cited by *Eusebius*, *Præpar.* pag. 454. Thus also you have *Esay* his

 Prophecy

Prophecy of *Cyrus* whose Name and Achievements he most *exactly* foretels long *before* he was born, *Isa.* 45. 1, *&c.* And then for *Daniel*'s Prophecies of the grand Revolutions of the Empires of the World, they do so *punctually* describe what happen'd long *after*, that *Porphyry* himself, tho a mortal Enemy to Christianity, is forced to *confess* the exact Agreement of his *Prophecies* with the *succeeding* Events (*vid.* St. *Chrysost. cont. Jud. Tom.* 6. *pag.* 326.) and hath no other way to *evade* the Force of them, but by affirming, without any Colour of *Reason* or *Authority*, that they were written *afterwards* in or near the Time of *Antiochus Epiphanes*; tho it is evident that the LXX. Interpreters who translated the *Old Testament* a hundred Years before, translated *this* Prophecy of *Daniel* with it. And *Josephus* expresly tells us, that *Jaddus* the High-Priest shewed this very Prophecy to *Alexander the Great*, who lived long before *Antiochus*, *Joseph. Antiq. l.* 11. But, to name no more, there are the Prophecies of the Messias, of the *Place* and most *particular* Circumstances of his *Nativity*, and *Ministry*, and *Life*, and *Death*, and *Resurrection*, and *Ascension*; all which were so punctually accomplished in our blessed Saviour, that did not the *Jews*, in whose Hands they have been always preserved, *own* and *acknowledge* them, one would be apt to suspect that they were *forged* on purpose by some Christian to countenance our Saviour's Pretence of being the true Messias.

And if there *be* any such thing as Prophecy, if but any *one* of all these Instances be *real* (and that none of them should, would be *very* strange) this *one* will be a sufficient Evidence of a Divine Providence; for to foresee *things* at a *distance*, and before their Causes are *in Being*, so as to describe before hand the precise *Time*, and *Place*, and *Manner* of their Existence, or to foresee things *casual* and *contingent*, that wholly depend upon the free Choice and Determination of *voluntary* Agents, requires a Mind of *infinite* Comprehension, that *sees* thro' all the whole *Series* of *Causes*, and hath a perfect Prospect not only of those Things that *actually* exist, but also of all that are *future* and *possible*. For, how is it possible to foresee a *remote* Futurity in all its *particular* Circumstances, whose immediate Cause is either *unborn*, or *free* and *undetermined*, without having a *perfect* Inspection not only into the *Natures*, and *Inclinations*, and *Tendencies* of Things, but also into all their particular *Conjunctions* and *Conspiracies*? And that Mind which sees into all *these*, must needs be *all-seeing*, and have nothing *concealed* from it, that is either *present*, or *future*, or *possible*. So that if there be any such thing as *Prediction* of *remote* and *contingent* Futurities, it must necessarily proceed from an *all-seeing* Mind; and if there be an *all-seeing* Mind that *oversees* the whole World, and accurately *inspects* all that is *past*, or *present*, or *to come* in it, is it imaginable that *such* a Mind should sit looking on as an *idle* Spectator, and act no Part itself in such a *vast* and *busy* Scene of Things? For that it thus exactly *inspects* and *takes notice* of the World, is a plain Argument that it is greatly *concerned* for it; and that it should be greatly concerned for it, and yet *do* nothing about it, nor *exercise* any *Providence* over it, is altogether *inconceivable*. And thus I have shewn, with all the *Plainness* I could, what *Evidences* there are to create in us a *Belief* of a *divine Providence*, which I persuade my self are *such*, as *duly considered*, cannot but prevail with Minds that are not *steel'd* against *all* Convictions, and utterly *abandoned* both of their *Reason* and *Modesty*.

SECT. III.

The Objections *against Providence* considered *and* answered.

I Now proceed to the *third* and *last* Thing proposed to be treated of in this Chapter; and that is to shew the *Insufficiency* and *Unreasonableness* of the common *Pretences* to *Infidelity* in this Matter; and here, not to insist upon all the *little* and *shameful* Cavils which have been made against Providence, which are so very *inconsiderable* that 'twould be too great a *Credit* to them to be seriously *confuted*; I shall insist upon those only which are the *common*, and do carry the *fairest* shew of Reason with them, and they are these five:

I. That the Exercise of a Providence doth not *comport* with the *Majesty* of God.

II. That it doth not *consist* with the *Ease* and *Happiness* of God.

III. That it is not *reconcilable* with the manifold *Evils* which we behold in the World.

IV. That if there were such a Providence, it could not admit of the *unequal* Divisions of *Goods* and *Evils* which are made in *this* World.

V. That it is not to be reconciled with the *wretched* State and Condition to which we behold the greatest Part of Mankind *abandoned.*

I. It is objected against the Being of Providence, that it doth not *comport* with the *Majesty* of *God* to take *notice of*, or *concern* himself about the *little* Affairs of this World. Which is *such* an *Objection* as carries its own *Answer* with it; for I would fain know which is most *suitable* to Majesty, to *sit still* or to *act*, to *wrap up* itself in everlasting *Sloth* and *Idleness*, or to *display* itself in a *vigorous Activity*? And if it be *greater* and more *majestick*, as doubtless it *is*, for any Being to *employ* and *exercise* its *Powers*, than to let them *lie asleep* and make no *use* of them, I would fain know in what *higher Sphere* can God exercise his Powers than in *governing* the World. For to govern well is the *best* and *greatest thing* that we can frame an Idea of; 'tis to do the *greatest* Good, to dispense the *noblest* Virtues, and to shed forth the *amplest* Sphere of Benefits. And therefore since the World is such a *vast Dominion*, doubtless the most *glorious* Employment that the *largest* Mind can undertake, is to *rule* and *govern* it; and there is nothing can be *greater* and more *Godlike*, than to *sit* at the *Helm* of this *floating* Universe, and *steer* its Motions to their Ends with a *steady* and *unerring* Hand. What therefore can God do more worthy of himself than to govern the *World well* and *wisely*? Or wherein can he better *display* the Glory of his *own* Perfection, than in keeping this *mighty* Engine in such an admirable *Order*? so as that tho its Parts are infinite in *Number* and *Variety*, and in their several Lines of Motion do frequently *cross* and *intersect* each other; yet they do neither *clash* nor *interfere*, *disturb* nor *confound* one another, but in their different Functions mutually *assist* each other; and all *conspire* in a common Good, composing out of their infinite *Discords* a most elegant *Harmony*, in which mighty *Performance* there is scope enough for an infinite *Power* to *exert* its utmost *Activity*, for an infinite *Wisdom* to *employ* its utmost *Skill*, and for an infinite *Goodness* to *put forth* its utmost *Beneficence*.

So that to undertake this *Province* of *governing* the *World*, is so far from being *beneath* the Majesty of God, that it would be an unpardonable *Arrogance* for any but a *God* to undertake it; and if *Contrivance* be the End of *Wisdom*, *Action* of *Power*, *Beneficence* of *Goodness*, as doubtless they are, where can the infinite *Power*, and *Wisdom*, and *Goodness* of God find a more *ample* Sphere for *Action*, *Contrivance*, and *Beneficence*, than in the *Government* of the World? And if it be the *proper* Exercise of Majesty to *govern*, what can

better

better *comport* with the *greatest* Majesty, than to *display* itself in the Government of the *largest* Dominion, which is that of the World?

But then considering that God himself is the *Father* of all this great *Family* of Beings, how can it be *beneath* his Majesty, to *take care* of his own *Offspring?* Why should it be below him to *provide* for any thing which was not below him to *create?* If there be any thing in this World so *contemptible* as not to deserve his *Regard*, why did he *create* it? If there be not, why should he *disdain* to *govern* it? And if every thing in this World hath some End for the sake of which *God* thought it *worthy* to be one of the *Objects* of his Creation, why should he not as well think the constant *Direction* of it to that *End*, to be an Object *worthy* of his *Providence?*

II. It is farther *objected* against the Being of *God*'s *Providence*, that it is *inconsistent* with his *Quiet* and *Happiness*. For to *attend* to such an *infinite* Number of Things as the *Government* of the World includes, cannot but *distract* his *Thoughts*, and thereby *disturb* him in the Enjoyment of himself. All which is a *gross* mistake, arising from no other cause but our measuring *God* by our *selves*; because we find our own Minds so *narrow*, and our own Powers so *limited*, as that we cannot without *Distraction* attend to many things *at once*, therefore we conclude that this *mighty* Business of *governing* the World must needs be very *uneasy* to God. Whereas if we considered God as a Being that is *infinitely perfect*, whose *Almighty Power* implies an *Ability* to do whatsoever is *possible*, and whose *infinite Knowledge* includes an universal *Prospect* of all Things *past*, *present* and *to come*, this would easily convince us of the *Vanity* and *Falsehood* of this Objection: for it is by Reason of *Imperfection*, that *Beings* operate with *Labour* and *Difficulty*; it is because their Powers are *weak*, and not *able* to *conquer* without *struggling* the *Resistances* of the Objects upon which they *operate*; but against *perfect* and *infinite* Powers there are no Objects can make such *Resistance* as to put them upon *Struggling* and *Labour*; so that to an *omniscient* and *omnipotent* Mind, there can be nothing difficult to be *known* or *effected*; and it is altogether as easy to it to know all things that are *knowable*, and *do* all things that are *possible*, as to know or do any *one* thing whatsoever; because whatsoever it doth, it doth *perfectly*. How then can the Government of the World be *difficult* or *uneasy* to God, whose Knowledge and Power are *perfect* and *infinite*, and consequently can *inspect* and *govern* all the Beings in the World with as much *Facility*, as if he had only *one* Being to take care of; and if *one* Man can with Ease manage *one* Business which he *perfectly* understands, why may not God manage *all*, who understands all *better* than we understand *any one*; and suppose the Things of the World were *infinite*, yet since God's Knowledge and Power are *infinite too*, there is the very same Proportion of *Infinite* to *Infinite* as of *One* to *One*.

For it is to be considered, that the natural *Tendency* of infinite *Power* is to *Action*, of infinite *Wisdom* to *Contrivance*, of infinite *Goodness* to *Beneficence*; and how can we imagine, that it should be any *Disturbance* to God to follow the *Inclination* of his own Perfections? And therefore, since it is *equally easy* to his *infinite* Power, and Wisdom, and Goodness, to exert themselves in a *larger* Sphere of Action, Contrivance and Beneficence as in a *narrower*, why should it more *disturb* him to govern a *whole World*, than *one single* Being? It would doubtless be *rather* a Disturbance to him to *act* nothing, to *contrive* nothing, and to do *no good*; because this would be to *cross* the Inclination of his own Perfection; but since it is as *easy* to him to exercise those Perfections about *many* Things as about *few*; to exercise them about a *World* of Things must rather be a *Delight* than a *Disturbance* to him, because the more he *exercises* them, the more he *complies* with their natural *Tendencies* and *Inclinations*.

And, what tho this World be a *great* and *cumbersome* Mass of Things, it can be no Labour to God to *move* and *actuate* it, who as an *universal Soul*, is diffused

diffused *thro' it*, and vitally *present* with every Part of it; for he moves it not as *Bodies* move *Bodies*, by *Thrusting* and *Pressure*, but as *Souls* move *Bodies* by *Thought* and *Will*; and as *our* Soul doth move its Body, and determine the Motion of its Members merely by *thinking* and *willing*, without any *material* Pressure, without any *Machines* or *Engines*; even so *God*, who is the *great Soul* of the World, doth *actuate* every Part, and *regulate* every Motion of it without any *laborious* Heavings or Thrustings, merely by the *all-commanding* Influence of his own *Almighty* Thought and Will. And if it be no Labour to *our* Soul to *think* and *will*, and therewithal to move our *Body*, why should we think it any Labour to *God*, by the same *Operations*, to move the *World*? For, suppose *our* Soul were *clothed* with a Body as *large* as the *whole Universe*, and were but *vitally present* with every Part of it, it would doubtless *move* it *all* with as much *Ease*, and *command* it every way with as much *Freedom*, as it doth the Body wherein it *now* resides; how then can it be *difficult* to a *perfect* Mind which *penetrates* all thro', and *co-exists* with every Part of this material World, to *move* and *actuate* the Whole, and *moderate* all the Motions of it according to its own *Will* and *Pleasure*?

III. It is farther objected against a *Providence*, that it is not consistent with the *manifold Evils*, both *moral* and *natural*, which we behold in this World. If there were a *just* and *gracious* Providence over-ruling the World, how can it be imagined that it should ever permit so many *Irregularities* as we every Day behold in Mens *Lives* and *Manners*, or suffer so many *Calamities* and *Miseries* to befal its Subjects? Both which, as I shall shew you, are very fairly *consistent* with a *just* and *righteous* Providence.

For as for the first, to wit, the *moral* Evils or Irregularities of Mens Manners, the *Permission* of them in the *World* is no more inconsistent with the *Goodness* of God's *Providence*, than his *making* of *free Agents* was with the *Goodness* of his *Nature*. For his Permission of *Sin* is no more than his permitting *free Agents* to act *freely*, and according to that *Liberty*, to *Good* and *Evil*, wherewith he *framed* and *created* them; and, why may he not as well *permit* them to act freely as *create* them to act freely? But to be *essentially* determined to *Good*, so as not to have any *natural* Liberty to *Evil*, seems *inconsistent* with the *State* of a *Creature*; for there is no *Will* can be *naturally* and *essentially* determined to good, which is not conducted by an *infallible* Mind; for whilst the *Mind*, which is the Guide, may possibly *err*, the *Will* which is guided by it, must be liable to *go astray*. Since therefore no *Will* can be *essentially* good but that which is *guided* by an *infallible* Mind, and since no Mind can be *essentially* infallible but one that is *Omniscient*, it necessarily follows, that to be *free* to Good and Evil is as *natural* to all Reasonable Creatures, as to be *finite* in *Knowledge* and *Understanding*; and accordingly, our Saviour declares, that to be *naturally* and *essentially* good, is the *incommunicable* Prerogative of the *Divine Nature*, Luke 18. 19. and if *so*, then either God must have made us *free* to Good and Evil, or *not* have made us *at all*, and there must have been no such Orders of Being as *Men* and *Angels*, which are the *Crown* and *Glory* of all the Creation; and is it not much *better* that there *should* be *such* Beings than that there should be *no* such thing as *Liberty* to Good and Evil? And if it were not inconsistent with the Divine Goodness to *create* free Agents, why should it be inconsistent with it to *permit* them to act *freely*? 'Tis true indeed, *we* are naturally more *free* to Evil than the *Angels*, and *some* Angels perhaps were more free to it than *others*; but what then? Was God obliged in Goodness to make all Kinds of Beings *equally Perfect*? If *so*, there must have been but *one* Kind of Beings in the whole Universe, and consequently there must have been *infinite* Kinds of Beings that are *capable* of Happiness for ever *unmade*, or for ever *unprovided for*. Wherefore, since the Goodness of God was so infinitely *fruitful* as to *communicate* itself in *different* Degrees of Perfection to all *Possibilities* of Being, that so there might be *no* Kind wanting to *compleat* the Universe, it was requisite that there should be a *mean* Degree

of Perfection between *Angels* and *Brutes*; otherwise there would have been a *Gap* and *Chasm* in the *World*, not only a *possible Kind* of Being wanting, but a *Kind* which by *partaking*, both of *Reason* and *Sense*, of *Spirit* and of *Matter*, is the Σύνδεσμος ζωτικὸς τῶν τε ἄνω καὶ τῶν κάτω, as *Simplicius* expresses it, i. e. *the vital Joint that clasps the upper and lower World together*; and if it were no way *unsuitable* to the Goodness of God to create the two *Extremes*, viz. *Angels* and *Brutes*, why should it be thought unsuitable to make a *middle* Nature between them?

It is true, by partaking of *both* Natures, we are not only *free* to Evil *in common* with *Angels*, but also liable to stronger *Temptations* to it than they; because we are placed in a tempting *Body* among a great many brutish *Passions* and *Appetites*, and that *Body* is placed in a tempting *World* among a great many sensitive *Goods* and *Evils*, that are continually importuning *those* Appetites to *mutiny* against *Reason*, and to carry us away Captive into *Folly* and *Wickedness*; but to place us in *this* State is so far from being *inconsistent* with the Goodness of God, that it is exactly *pursuant* to the *Design* of a most *wise* and *gracious* Providence. For since we are placed by the *Condition* of our *Natures* in a *lower* Rank of Being and Perfection than *Angels*, we have no more reason to complain of *that*, than *Ants* or *Flies* have that they are not Men. But in this *imperfect* State the *highest* good that *Providence* could *design* us, was to put us into a State of *Trial* and *Probation*, wherein, by the *good Use* of our *Liberty*, we might by degrees *fit* our selves *for*, and at length arrive to a *better* and more *raised* Condition; and by an *orderly* Progression from this rude and imperfect State, might in the *different* Periods of our Lives *grow up* into *higher* and more *excellent* Capacities, and at length ripen into Perfection. Now in order to our *Trial* it was requisite we should be placed among Difficulties, without which no *Proof* can be made of our *Virtues*, of our *Patience*, and *Temperance*, and *Chastity*, and *Equanimity*, *Meekness* and *Sobriety*; all which are proper to us as Beings made up of *Angel* and *Brute*; from the *latter* of which *Natures* all those *brutal* Appetites arise in us, in the *good* or *bad* Government whereof consists the Nature of Human *Virtue* and *Vice*. So that this present State of our Life is intended by *God* for a *Field* of *Combat* between our *Sense* and our *Reason*, our *brutal* and *angelical* Nature, and that the *Victory* of our *Reason* might thro' the *Difficulty* of it be rendered more *glorious* and *rewardable*, God hath furnished its *Antagonist* with the *Weapons* of worldly *Temptation* to *assault* and *oppose* it, to try its *Strength* and *Mettle*, and to exercise both its *active* and *passive* Virtues; intending when it hath *conquered*, to *translate* us *hence* as a *Reward* of our *Victory* into a *free* and *disentangled* State, where we shall be *vexed* and *enticed* no more with the *Importunities* of *sensual* Lust and Affection, but to all Eternity enjoy the Serenity and Pleasure of a *pure*, *angelical* Nature. And what is there in all this that is any way *unsuitable*, yea, that is not every way *answerable* to the Goodness of Providence? 'Tis true, instead of *conquering*, we may, if we please, yield our selves *captive* to *Folly* and *Wickedness*; but what then? Is Providence to be *blamed* for leaving Mens Hands at Liberty, because some have been so *desperate* as to cut their own *Throats*? 'Tis sufficient, that he hath *proposed* to us *Reward* enough to *encourage* us to *contend*, and *contributed* to us *Assistance* enough to *enable* us to *conquer*, and having *done* all that becomes a *wise* and *good* Governor to prevent our *Sin* and *Ruin*, who is to be *blamed* for it but *our selves*? God leaves us at *Liberty* indeed among *Temptations* to *Evil*; and this the very *State* and *Composition* of our Natures requires; but all he *designs* by it, is to *exercise* our *Virtues*, and thereby to *improve* and *train* us up to a State of *higher* Perfection, and to *furnish* us with glorious Opportunities of *fighting for*, and *winning* Crowns and Rewards; and this is so far from any way *reflecting* on the *Goodness* of his Providence, that it is an *illustrious Instance* of it; and yet 'tis only *thus far* that he is concerned in the Being of *Sin* in the World; all the *rest* is owing to our own *mad* and *desperate* Abuse of our natural Liberty, to our *wilful* Opposition

to

to his *gracious Intentions,* and *obstinate Resistance* to his *powerful* Arts and Methods of *preventing* our Sin and Ruin. What then can be more *unreasonable* than for us to *object* against the *Goodness* of God's *Providence* that which is *purely* the Effect of our own *Madness* and *Folly*?

And if the Evil of *Sin* be no way inconsistent with the Goodness of Providence, much less is the Evil of *Misery*; since the *Generality* of those *Evils* which we *suffer* in this *World,* are either the *natural* Effects, or the *just* Punishments, or the *necessary* Antidotes and Preventives of our Sin. And therefore when you come into a great School of *wild* and *unruly* Boys, you may as well argue that there is no *Master* of it, because there are *Rods* and *Ferula*'s in it, as that there is no *Providence* over this *sinful World,* because there are *Miseries* and *Afflictions* in it; for upon the Being of *Sin* in the *World,* the Being of *Misery* is so far from being an Argument against *Providence* that 'tis rather a *Demonstration* of it; because a *sinful World* can no more be *governed* without *Misery,* than an *unruly* School without *Correction.*

IV. Another Objection that is made against *Providence* is that *unequal* Division of *Goods* and *Evils* that is made in this World. If there were a *just* Providence that *over-ruled* the World, one would think it should make a more *visible* Distinction between *good* and *bad* Men in the *Distribution* of its *Rewards* and *Punishments*; whereas in the *ordinary* Course of Things we see *all Things happen alike to all,* and *many times* it fares *worst* with the *best,* and *best* with the *worst* of Men. Now because this is the *greatest* and most *universal Objection* that was *ever* urged against the *Providence* of God, I shall in answer to it endeavour to shew. 1. That it is for the most part *false* and *groundless.* 2. That so *far* as it is *true,* it is no Argument *at all* against a Providence.

First, I say, this *Objection,* that there is no *Difference* made among *Men* as to the *Goods* and *Evils* of *this* World, is in a great Measure *false* and *groundless.* For I make no doubt but in the *ordinary Course* of Things *good Men* are more *prosperous* even in *this* World than *bad*: as for times of *Persecution,* they are a just *Exception* from the *general* Rule of Providence; because therein God to serve his *own* Glory and the *great* Ends of Religion, exchangeth with good Men *spiritual* for *temporal,* and *heavenly* for *earthly* Enjoyments, which is such an *Exchange* as no Man will account *Robbery,* that understands the just *Value* of those *different* Commodities.

'Tis true, it hath been an *usual* Complaint in all *Times* and *Ages,* that it fares *best* with the *worst,* and *worst* with the *best*; and thro' the *Commonness* of it, it is now grown into a *Maxim.* But it is to be considered that *Men* always *pity* the *Miserable,* and *envy* the *Prosperous*; and that these *Passions* do naturally *bribe* their Judgments to think *worse* of the *one,* and *better* of the *other,* than *either* deserve: For those whom we *pity* we are inclined to *love,* and those whom we *love* we are inclined to *think well* of; as on the contrary, those whom we *envy* we are inclined to *hate,* and those whom we *hate* we are inclined to *think ill* of; and then because *God* doth not *reward* and *punish* Men according to the *Sentence* that our *blind Pity* or *Envy* passes on them, we are ready to *quarrel* with his *Providence.* And besides, there are a world of *close Hypocrites,* that under a mighty *Shew* and *Ostentation* of *Piety* do *secretly* indulge themselves in sundry *wasteful* and *ruinous* Vices, which many times reduce them to *Poverty* and *Misery,* and *these* we commonly *rank* among the *Good* it *fares ill* with; as on the *contrary* there are abundance of *good Men,* that in the *Course* of a *reserved, modest* and *unaffected* Piety, which makes but very *little Shew* in the *Eye* of the *World,* are *blest* and *prospered,* and *these* we *as commonly* rank among the *Bad* that *fare well.* Since therefore we are such *incompetent* Judges of *good* and *bad* Men, we should be very *careful* how we *object* against the *Providence* of *God* such *Maxims* as are only founded on our own *fallacious* Observations. But could we *strip* our *selves* of *Pity* and *Envy,* and *penetrate* into the *Insides* of Men, I doubt not but we should soon be satisfied that *good* Men have *much* the Advantage of *bad,* even as to the Happiness

pinefs and *Profperity* of *this* World; for tho perhaps there are many more *bad* Men *profperous* than *good*, becaufe there are *more bad* than *good Men* in the *World*, yet in *proportion* to their *Numbers* I doubt the *profperous Good* would far exceed the *profperous Bad*, tho there fhould be but *Thirty* of the one, to *Forty* of the other. And fuppofing that in proportion there were more *bad* Men than *good* advanced to *worldly Greatnefs*, (which yet is very *doubtful*, confidering how *prone* we are to judge *ill* of *great Men*, and to *reckon more* of them into the Number of the *Bad* than we *ought*, thro' *Envy* and *Mifunderftanding* the *Reafons* of their *Actions*) yet it is to be confidered, that the *true* State of Worldly *Happinefs* and *Profperity* confifts not in a *great* but in a *moderate* Fortune; and that the good Things of this World are no where fo *freely* and *entirely* enjoyed, as in the *middle Region* between *Poverty* and *Riches*. For as *Poverty* is attended with *Famine*, and *Cold*, and *Anguifh*, fo *Greatnefs* is attended with *Hurry* and *Tumult*, *impaled* with *Cares*, and *imprifoned* with *Pomp* and *tedious Ceremony*: So that the *truly* Unfortunate are the *Neceffitous* and the *Great*, while the *middle* State, without partaking of the *Evils* of *either*, includes all that is *truly defirable* in *both* Extremes, all that Poverty *wants*, and all that Greatnefs *enjoys*; and in *this* happy State I dare boldly affirm there are proportionably *far more* good Men than bad: For it is a very *rare* thing for a *good* Man that is *honeft* and *induftrious*, and *depends* upon God for a Bleffing, to be reduc'd to *extreme Neceffity*; fo *very rare*, that *David* in all his Life-time could not produce one Inftance of it, *Pfal.* 37. 25. for *miferable* Poverty is ufually the Confequence either of *Idlenefs*, or *Luxury*, or *Faction*, or *Knavery*; all which are *inconfiftent* with true Goodnefs; and a good Man in any *Condition* on this fide *pinching* Neceffity, is *ordinarily*, even in *this* Life, far more happy, than the moft *gay* and *profperous* Sinner, whofe *outward* Glory and Greatnefs is ufually nothing but the *gaudy Cover* of a *Tragical Infide*, of a *Mind* that is *tortured* with *Pride* and *Envy*, with *boundlefs* Hopes, *infatiable* Defires, and *horrible* Reflections, that *dafh* and *imbitter* all his Enjoyments; while the good Man under his *mean* and *fimple* Outfide, carries a *great* and *happy* Soul, a *contented* Mind, a *chearful* Heart, and a *calm* Confcience, which mightily *fweeten* all his *Enjoyments*, and make his *homely* Morfel *outrelifh* the moft ftudied *Luxuries*. Let us therefore but judge *impartially* of *Men*, and but *truly* ftate what is the *moft Happy* Condition of *human Life*, and *proportion* the Number of the *Good* to the *Bad*, and *balance* the *Infides* of the one with the *Outfides* of the other, and I doubt not but we fhall be eafily convinced that even in *this* Life the good *ordinarily* fare much *better* than the *bad*: for in true Computation *Neceffity* and *Greatnefs* are the only *unfortunate* States of humane Life, and in *thefe* there are far more *bad Men* than *good*, but *between* thefe Two *all* Conditions are in a manner *indifferent* as to the Happinefs of of Men; and in this happy *Mean* there are far more *good Men* than *bad*; and then the Minds of *good Men* having infinitely the *Advantage* of the Minds of *bad*, as to the rendring their outword Condition happy, it is impoffible but that *ordinarily* and *generally* they muft be the more *happy* and *profperous*.

Secondly, So far as this Maxim, that *all things happen alike to all*, is *true*, it is *no* Argument at *all* againft a Providence; and that upon thefe following Accounts. 1. Becaufe many of the *Goods* and *Evils* of this World happen to us, not as *Rewards* and *Punifhments*, but in the *neceffary* Courfe of *Secondary* Caufes. 2. Becaufe the *Goods* and *Evils* of this World are in *themfelves* fo *mean* and *inconfiderable*, that it would be *beneath* the Wifdom of Providence to be very *exact* and *curious* in the *Diftribution* of 'em. 3. Becaufe this Life is properly the State of our *Trial* and *Probation*, and not of our *Reward* and *Punifhment*. 4. Becaufe the *Goods* and *Evils* that befal us here are not fo truly to be eftimated by *themfelves* as by their *Effects* and *Confequents*. 5. This *promifcuous* Diftribution of Things, fo far as it is, is very requifite to affure

us of a *Judgment* to come. 6. Because the *exact* Adjustment of Things is reserved for a *future Judgment.*

I. The *happening of all things alike to all* is no Argument *against* Providence; because many of the *Goods* and *Evils* of this World happen to us, not as *Rewards* and *Punishments*, but in the *necessary* Course of *Second Causes.* For in this Life good and bad Men are so *mingled* together, that in Cases of *Common* Calamity, what happens to the *one* must happen to the *other* without a *miraculous* Interposal of Providence. Thus, while God leaves *Second Causes* to their *natural* Course, how is it possible that *War*, or *Plague*, or *Famine* should distinguish between the Good and Bad that are *incorporated* together in the same *Societies*; and so long as *free* Agents are left to act *freely*, wicked *Parents* will frequently *spoil* their *Constitutions* by the repeated Excesses of their *Riot* and *Wantonness*, and while they do so, their Diseases, without a *Miracle*, will descend upon their *righteous*, as well as *unrighteous* Posterity; and wicked *Neighbours*, whilst it lies in their *way*, or serves their *Interest*, will *wrong* and *oppress* the Just and Unjust without any *Distinction.* But you will say, why then doth not Providence *interpose* between Second Causes and good Men, and *miraculously* protect them from their mischievous Effects? To which in short I answer, that in some *extraordinary* Cases God hath interposed, of which there are *innumerable* Instances both in *Sacred* and *Profane* History; but to expect that he should *ordinarily* and *constantly* do this, is very *unreasonable*, because it cannot be done without giving a perpetual *Disturbance* to the *Course* of Nature; which being in the whole most *orderly* and *regular*, full of admirable *Beauty* and *Contrivance*, ought not to be *disturbed* and *inverted* upon ordinary Occasions. For, if the established Course of things be *wise* and *regular* in the *whole*, why should we expect that God should be perpetually *tampering* with it, and *interrupting* and *varying* it by his immediate Interposals, as if he were *dissatisfied* with his own *Contrivance*, and upon every *Revisal* of this great Volume of the World did still discover new *Errata* in it to be *corrected* and *amended.* The Evils therefore which *good* Men suffer, are not ordinarily so *momentous* as to oblige a *wise* and *good* God to *interrupt* the Course of Nature to *prevent* them; and it is much better that *some* Violences should be offered to good Men, than that a *constant* Violence should be offered to the *Nature of Things*; and since God can carry on his good Designs to good Men in a *still* and *silent* Path, and cause all their *adverse* Accidents to *unwind* of themselves, and at last to *clear* up into a blessed Close, is it not much better he should do it this way, than by offering *perpetual* Violence and Disturbance to Nature?

II. The *happening of all things alike to all,* is no Argument *against* a Providence; because the Goods and Evils of this World are so mean and *inconsiderable*, that it would be *beneath* the Wisdom of Providence to be very *exact* and *curious* in the Distribution of them. It is no Part of Wisdom to be *nice* and *curious* about *Trifles.* 'Twas ridiculous *enough* in *Caligula* to employ a *mighty* Army only to gather a great Heap of *Cockle-shells*: but when he had gathered them, it would have been much *more* ridiculous to have taken a great deal of care to divide them amongst his Soldiers, in *exact* Proportions to each one's *Merit* and *Desert.* Now, tho' *we* look upon the Goods and Evils of this World, as Things of *vast* and *mighty* Moment; yet *God*, who sees them with far better Eyes than we, knows very well that they are but *Trifles*, in comparison with those *endless* Goods or Evils we must *enjoy* or suffer in another World, and that it is a very *inconsiderable* thing whether we fare *well* or *ill* this moment, who immediately after must fare *well* or *ill for ever*; and therefore he looks on it, as he *justly* may, as a thing *beneath* his *infinite* Wisdom, to be very *exact* and *curious* in dividing to us these *momentary* Trifles in *just* Proportions to our particular Deserts: And did we not strangely *magnify* them, by looking on them thro' the *false* Opticks of our own *fantastick* Hopes and Fears, we should be so far from *objecting* against

God's

God's *Providence* these *unequal* Distributions of them; that were they more *exact* and *equal*, we should rather object against his *Wisdom*, as thinking it a very *mean* Employment for a Deity to be very *nice* and *curious* in proportioning such *momentary* Enjoyments and Sufferings to the Merit or Demerit of *immortal* Creatures. So that considering of what little Moment the present *Goods* and *Evils* are, which good Men *suffer* and bad Men *enjoy*, they ought rather to be look'd on as an Argument of God's *Wisdom* than as an Objection against his *Providence*; for he understands the *just* Value of Things, and knows that the *best* of these worldly Goods are *bad* enough to be thrown away upon the worst of Men, and so expresses his just *Scorn* of these *admired* Vanities, by scattering them abroad with a *careless* Hand: For, why should he partake of the Errors of *vulgar Opinion*, and express himself so very *regardful* of these Trifles, as to put them in Gold Scales, and weigh them out to Mankind by Grains and Scruples.

III. That *all things here do happen alike to all*, is no Argument against Providence: because this Life is properly the State of our *Trial* and *Probation*, and not of our *Reward* and *Punishment*. The Divine Providenee hath placed us here as *Candidates* and *Probationers* for those everlasting Preferments it designs us hereafter, that so by *training* and *exercising* us in all those excellent Virtues that are proper to our Natures, it may improve us from *one* Degree of Perfection to *another*, till at last it hath *accomplished* us for the heavenly State; in order to which *Design* it is necessary that there should be an *unequal* Distribution of Things, whereby good Men may sometimes *suffer*, and bad Men *prosper*; otherwise there would be no *Occasion* for any of our *passive* Virtues, nor any *Trial* of our *active*. For Affliction is the Theatre of *Patience*, and *Fortitude*, and *Resignation* to God, and without it, there would be no *Room* in the *Lives* of good Men for the Exercise of those Virtues, which, for want of *Objects* to act on, would *rust* and wax *languid*. Again, Difficulty is the Touchstone of our *Love*, and *Faith*, and *Ingenuity*, but should Providence be always *crowning* the Righteous, and *dragging* Offenders to Execution, such a Procedure would *determine* our Liberty, and leave us no room for the Exercise of our *Faith* and *Ingenuity*; for then the *Rewards* and *Punishments* of Providence would be so *sensibly* and *continually* present with us, and so *urgently* press upon our Hopes and Fears, that it would be impossible for us *not* to *believe* in God, and next to impossible not to *obey* him; and being thus *forced* to believe and obey, what *Excellency* would there be in our Piety and Virtue? What *Charity* is it for a *Miser* to lend his *Money* upon *Assurance* of Twenty *per Cent*? Or what *Loyalty* for a *Traitor* to discover his *Conspirators* within Sight of a Rack? And just as little Virtue would there be in any of our good *Works*, were there an *exact Equality* in the *Distributions* of *Providence*. For then we should never do a *good* Work but upon the *certain* Prospect of an *immediate* Reward, nor repent of a *bad* one but upon the *irresistible Dread* of some *immediate Punishment*. But in this *Inequality* of Things, wherein the *Good* often *suffer* and the wicked *prosper*, we are left in a *free* and *unconstrained* Condition, and whether we are *virtuous* or *vicious*, *devout* or *profane*, it is out of *Choice* and not out of *Necessity*. So that now to *believe* and *obey* the sacred *Dictates* of Religion is *generous* and *ingenuous*, and our *Faith* and *Obedience* is our *Virtue* and *Excellency*; because we believe and obey *without* Force, and *against* Temptations and Difficulties.

And as this *unequal State* of Things is of absolute Necessity, to *try* and *exercise* our Virtues, so it is also very *assistant* thereunto. For that *Providence* doth *generally* and not *universally* bless and prosper good Men, is a great Support to a *wise* and *rational* Belief. For as a late excellent Author hath well observed, if Things were *constantly* managed one Way without any *Variation*, we might be apt to conclude that the World was under the *rigid* Laws of a *fatal* Necessity; if on the other side there were no *Rule* observed, no *Footsteps* of *Method* in the Dispensations of *Providence* we might be tempted to believe

that

that *Chance* rules the World; but when we obſerve that in the Management of Things there is an *Intermixture* of theſe Two, *viz.* that there is a *general Rule*, and that there are *particular* Exceptions from it, we have juſt Reaſon to conclude that all is under a *free* Almighty Agent that rules the World according to the Determinations of his own Will. As this Way of Providence, *viz.* to *interweave* into good Mens Fortunes *Adverſity* with *Proſperity*, is in this Reſpect very advantageous to their *Faith*, ſo is it alſo to the *whole State* of their Virtue; for as on the one hand a *continued* Train of *proſperous* Events would be apt to *bloat* and *elevate* their Minds, ſo on the other hand a continued Series of *Adverſity* would be apt to *ſink* and *depreſs* their Spirits, whilſt this middle Way of *Interchange* in their Condition *balances* them on both Sides, and keeps them in an *even*, *ſteady* and *well-poized* Temper. Since therefore this Life is the State of our *Trial*, 'tis evident that an *exact* Equality of Things would be a much ſtronger Objection againſt the *Wiſdom* of Providence, than all theſe *preſent* Inequalities are againſt the *Juſtice* of it. For *Hardſhips* and *Difficulties* are neceſſary to a State of *Trial*; and were good Men always *bleſt*, and bad Men always *puniſhed*, this Life, inſtead of being a *Probation* to either, would be the Heaven of the *one*, and the Hell of the *other*; and ſince ſome *Afflictions* are neceſſary to try good Men, and ſome *Proſperities* to try bad, it would be a ſtrange *Overſight* of Providence, when it deſigns the Trial of *both*, to fix them in ſuch a Condition wherein no thorow Experiment can be made of *either*. So that for us to object againſt Providence for making ſuch *unequal* Diſtributions in a State wherein it deſigns our *Trial*, is in effect to object againſt *Wiſdom* for acting moſt *ſuitable* to its *own* Deſigns.

IV. That *all Things here do happen alike to all* is no Argument againſt *Providence*, becauſe the Goods and Evils that befal us *here*, are not ſo truly to be eſtimated by *themſelves* as by their *Effects* and *Conſequents*. For the Divine Providence, which runs thro' all things, hath *diſpoſed* and *connected* them into ſuch a Series and Order, that there is no ſingle *Event* or *Accident*, but what is purely miraculous, but depends upon the *whole* Syſtem, and hath *innumerable* Cauſes antecedent to it, and *innumerable* Conſequents attending it; and what theſe Conſequents will be, whether *good* or *bad*, is beyond our Skill to *prognoſticate:* So that tho the *Event* be never ſo *good* or *bad*, *ſingly* and *apart* by it ſelf, yet in *Conjunction* with all thoſe *Conſequents* that will moſt certainly attend it, the *beſt Event*, for all we know, may prove moſt *miſchievous*, and the *worſt* moſt *beneficial* to us. So that for us *boldly* to pronounce concerning the Good or Evil of Events, before we ſee the *Train* of *Conſequents* that follow them, is very *raſh* and *inconſiderate*. As for Inſtance, you ſee a good Man *oppreſſed* with Sorrows and Afflictions, and a bad Man *crowned* with Pleaſures and Proſperities; and conſidering theſe things *apart* by themſelves, you conclude that the one fares very *ill*, and the other very *well*; but did you at the ſame Time ſee the Conſequents of the *one*'s Adverſity and the *other*'s Proſperity, it's probable you would conclude the quite contrary, *viz.* that the good Man's *Adverſity* was a *Bleſſing*, and the bad Man's *Proſperity* a *Curſe*. For I dare boldly affirm that *good* Men *generally* reap more ſubſtantial *Benefit* from their *Afflictions* than *bad Men* do from their *Proſperities:* the one ſmarts indeed at preſent; but what follows? Perhaps his *Mind* is cured by it of ſome *Diſeaſe* that is ten times worſe to him than his *outward* Affliction, of *Avarice* or *Impatience*, of *Envy* or *Diſcontent*, of *Pride* or *Vanity of Spirit*; his *Riches* are *leſſened*, but his *Virtues* are *improved* by it; his *Body* is *impaired*, but his *Mind* is grown *ſound* and *hail* by it, and what he hath loſt in *Health*, or *Wealth*, or *Pleaſure*, or *Honour*, he hath gained with vaſt Advantage in *Wiſdom* and *Goodneſs*, in *Tranquillity of Mind* and *Self-Enjoyment*. And methinks no Man who believes he hath a *Soul*, ſhould grudge to ſuffer any *tolerable Affliction* for the bettering of his *Mind*, his *Will*, and his *Conſcience*. On the other hand the *bad* Man *triumphs*

and

and *rejoyces* at present; but what follows? His Prosperity either *shrivels* him into Miserableness, or *melts* him into Luxury; the former of which *impoverishes*, and the latter *diseases* him; for if the *former* be the Effect of his Prosperity, it *increases* his Needs, because before he needed only what he had *not*, but now he needs both what he *hath not* and what he *hath*, his covetous *Desires* treating him as the *Falconer* doth his *Hawk*, still *luring* him off from what he hath seized to fly at *new* Game, and never permitting him to *prey* upon his *own Quarrey*; and if the *latter* be the Effect of his *Prosperity*, that is, if it *melts* him into Luxury, it thereby wastes his *Health* to be sure, and commonly his *Estate* too; and so whereas it *found* him *poor* and *well*, it leaves him *poor* and *diseased*, and only took him up from the *Plough*, and sets him down at the *Hospital*. In general, while he is possess'd of it,, it only *bloats* and *swells* him, makes him *proud* and *insolent*, *griping* and *oppressive*, *pampers* and *enrages* his Lust, *stretches* out his Desires into an insatiable *Bulimy*, *sticks* his Mind full of *Cares*, and his Conscience of *Guilt*, and by all these woful Effects it *inflames* his Reckoning with God, and *treasures* up Wrath for him against the Day of Wrath; so that comparing the Consequences of the good Man's *Adversity* with those of the bad Man's *Prosperity*, it is evident that the former fares *well* even in his *worst* Condition, and the latter *ill* in his *best*. *It's well for me*, saith good *David*, *that I was afflicted, for before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I have kept thy Commandments*, Psal. 119. 67. But on the contrary, *When the Wicked spring as the Grass*, saith the same Author, *and when all the Workers of Iniquity do flourish, it is that they shall be destroyed for ever*, Psal. 92. 7. If then in the Consequents of Things good Men are *blessed* in their Afflictions, and bad Men *plagued* in their Prosperities, as it is apparent they *generally* are, these *unequal* Distributions are so far from being an Argument *against* Providence, that they are a glorious Instance of it. For wherein could the divine Providence better express its *Justice* and *Wisdom* together, than by *benefitting* the Good, and *punishing* the Bad by such *cross* and *improbable* Methods?

V. *That all Things here do happen alike to all*, is no Argument against *Providence*, because it is very *requisite* it should *often* do so, to assure us of a *Judgment* to come. For were the Affairs of this World managed with that *exact* Equality as that the *Good* did never suffer, nor the *Bad* escape unpunished, we should be deprived of one of the *best* moral *Arguments* of a *future Judgment*. For as on the one Hand, should *Providence* never reward the *Good* nor punish the *Bad* in *this* Life, but confound them together without *any* Distinction, it might *tempt* us to *despair* of any *just Retributions* from it in the *Life to come*; so on the other Hand, were the *Goods* and *Evils* of this Life, *weigh'd out* to Men in *exact* Proportions to their *Merit* and *Demerit*, without any *Inequality*, we might be tempted to think that there is no *need of*, and consequently no *ground* to expect any *Judgment to come*. For what *occasion* would there be for any *future Judgment*, if all Things were already exactly *balanced* and *adjusted*; and therefore as to *confirm* us in the *Belief* of the *Justice* of *Providence*, it was requisite the same *plain Instances* should be given of its distinguishing the Good from the Bad by *present Rewards* and *Punishments*; so to *confirm* us in the *Expectation* of a *Judgment to come*, it was no less *requisite* that there should be some *Inequality* in the present *Management* and *Distribution* of Things, and that the *Goods* and *Evils* of *this* World should not be administred with that exact Regularity as to *prevent* the *Necessity* of a *Day of Judgment*; but that there should be *undecided* Cases enough remaining for a *future* Tribunal to *adjust* and *determine*. So that as in the *present* Management of Things as there is *Equality* enough to induce us to believe a *just* Providence; so there is also *Inequality* enough to induce us to *expect* a *future Judgment*; God having *wisely* provided in his *present* Administration of Things, to give us Instances enough of his *just Procedure* towards the *Good* and *Bad*, and yet to leave us Instances enough of *unrewarded* Virtue and *prosperous* Wickedness, to assure us that he intends an *After-reckoning*. For how can we reflect upon these repeated *Examples* of just *Reward* and *Punishment*,

which

which in every Age almost God sets before us, and not believe that he *governs* the World? And how can we reflect upon those *manifold* Evils which some *good* Men *suffer*, and Goods which some *bad* Men *enjoy*, without believing that he hath appointed a Day wherein he will *adjust* these Inequalities, and *vindicate* the Cause of *oppressed* Virtue, and *crush* triumphant Wickedness into *everlasting Confusion*?

VI. And lastly, *That all Things here do happen alike to all*, is no Argument against *Providence*, because the *exact* Adjustment of Things is reserved for a *future Judgment*. I confess were God to make no *other Distribution* to the Just and Unjust, but what is made in *this Life*, the *Inequality* of it would be a *strong Objection* against his *Providence*; but then considering that all this *cloudy Scene* of Things will shortly *close up* in a *righteous* Judgment, wherein for the *Evils* which the *Good* have *suffered*, they shall be rewarded with an *eternal Happiness*, and for the *Goods* which the *Bad* have *enjoyed* they shall be *doomed* to *everlasting Wretchedness*: This is sufficient to vindicate the Justice of *Providence*, were these *present* Inequalities a *thousand* Times greater than they are. For suppose that after a short *melancholy* Dream *good* Men were to live *happily*, and after as short a *pleasant* one *bad* Men were to live *wretchedly* but for a *thousand* Years in this World; we might as well object against Providence this unequal Distribution of the *melancholy* Dream to the *Good*, and the *pleasant* one to the *Bad*; notwithstanding the succeeding thousand Years of their *Happiness* and *Misery*, as we do the *Sufferings* of the Righteous and *Prosperities* of the Wicked, which bear far less Proportion to that Eternity of Happiness and Misery that is to *succeed* them, than the *Sorrow* or *Pleasure* of a Moment's Dream doth to a thousand Years *real* Calamity or Blessedness.

For the Providence of God from the *first* to the *last*, is all but *one* continued Plot, like that of a *well-contriv'd* Comedy, which at first is very *obscure* and *intricate*; so that by what is *past* or *present*, there is no guessing at the Conclusion; for all thro' the *intermediate* Acts, *Virtue* and *Honour* fight their Way thro' *Difficulties* and *Disappointments*, and sometimes the *Hero* acts a *sad*, and sometimes the *Villain* a *prosperous* Part, at which the *unskilful* Spectator *grieves*, and is ready to *damn* the Poet for distributing such unequal Fates; but then in the *fifth* and *last* Act all the cross Accidents *clear up* and issue in a *fair* Conclusion; and in the Close of all the Hero is *crowned*, and the Villain *hissed off* the Stage. Let us therefore have but the Patience to stay till Providence hath *finished* its *whole* Plot, and closed up all its *mighty* Scenes in the *general* Judgment of the World, and then we shall see all these *Inequalities* set *right*, and the Fates of good and bad Men *determined* by a most *just* Award. But for us to *quarrel* at Providence now, who are yet got no farther, it may be, than to the *middle* of the great *Drama*, and to *find fault* with its Procedure for *crossing* the Good, and *prospering* the Bad, is rudely to *overturn* the Stage before the *Entrance* into the *fifth* Act, and to *hiss* off the *Almighty* Poet for not *compleating* his Design before he is arrived to the *Conclusion*. And thus I have endeavoured to answer *more at large* this Objection against Providence, because it hath been more insisted on than any other, and hath more generally *stumbled* Mens Belief of divine Providence.

V. And, Lastly, it is farther *objected*, That the Being of a *just* and *good* Providence, is not to be reconciled with that *wretched* State and Condition to which we behold the *greatest* Part of Mankind *abandoned*. For, if there were a good Providence that over-rul'd the Affairs of this World, how is it imaginable that ever so *great* a Part of Mankind as the *infidel World* includes, should be left so utterly *destitute* as they are of the *Knowledge of God*, and of the *Means* of attaining *everlasting Happiness*? To which I shall briefly answer these three Things.

I. That the *infidel World* is not perhaps left so *utterly* destitute as we are apt to *imagine*; for they have the *Law of Nature* to *direct* them, by which alone they must be *tried*, and *stand* or *fall* at the Day of Judgment; which as to the *main Strokes* of their Duty, is so *plain* and *intelligible*, that no *sincere* Inquirer

can be ignorant of it; and, if when they *may* understand it they *will* not, or, if when they *do* understand it, they wilfully *transgress* and *violate* it, the divine Providence hath been sufficiently *good* to them, and that leaves them for ever *inexcusable*. For so far as their Ignorance is *invincible* it is not their *Sin*, nor shall they ever be *accountable* for it, or for any sinful *Omission* or *Commission* thence proceeding, and if they only answer for not *understanding* their Duty when they *might*, or for not *performing* it so far as they *understood* it, they can have no Reason to complain that they are *hardly dealt* with. But then,

II. As *they* have not those vast Advantages that *we* have of *becoming* good, and *growing up* into the State of Perfection and Happiness, so proportionably *less* Degrees of *Good* will be *accepted* of those that do *well*, and *less* Degrees of *Punishment* exacted of those that do *ill*; for that Maxim of our Saviour, *Luke* 12. 48. *To whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required*, necessarily implies the *contrary*, *viz.* That to whomsoever *less* is *given*, of him *less* shall be *required*; and if so, it is certain that so much as *their* Means of being good are less than *ours*, so much the less *good* God will accept of *them* than of *us*; and as God will accept less *Good* of the *best* Infidels, so he will exact less *Punishment* of the *worst*; for so our Saviour himself hath assured us, that it will be more tolerable for *Tyre* and *Sidon*, and *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* in the last Day, than for those who persist in their *Unbelief* and *Disobedience*, in despite of the Proposals of the Gospel. If then in Proportion of their present *Disadvantages* less Good will be *accepted* of those who make *any* Improvement, and less Punishment *exacted* of them who make *none*, neither the *one* sort, nor the *other*, hath any Reason to complain; and tho their Condition were *worse* than it is, yet under these Circumstances it would be fairly *consistent* with the *Goodness* of the divine Providence. But then,

III. And lastly, Tho their Condition *were* a great deal worse than it *is*, yet it would be very unreasonable for us to *object* against the *Goodness* of the divine Providence, unless we *better* understood than we *do*, how God will dispose of them in the *other* World. Indeed if Mens *Fate* consisted in what they *suffer* and *enjoy* in *this Life*, we might better judge of Providence by what is *before us*; but since our *main* State is beyond the Grave, whatever befals us *here* is very inconsiderable, compared with what we must suffer or enjoy *hereafter*; and as for the *present* Disadvantages which the heathen World lies under, they are but very *short* and *momentary*, and if Providence *pleases*, it can abundantly *compensate* them in the *World to come*; and therefore since *yet* we know not what it *will* do, as having no Revelation in the Case, it becomes us to *suspend* our Judgment till the *Event* hath *determined* it.

This *we* know, that Providence hath *Ways* enough, and *Time* enough too between *this* and the Day of Judgment, to supply these *destitute* Souls with all those spiritual *Advantages* in the *other Life*, which for Reasons best known to it self it hath *hitherto* withheld from them; it may if it pleases extend their *Trial* and *Probation* beyond *this* Life, and discover in the *other* Life the Light of the *Gospel*, to *so many* of them at least, as have *here* made any tolerable *Improvements* under the Light of *Nature*, and if they make good Use of it, *reward* them accordingly. For tho *we* Christians have no reason to expect any *farther* Trial after this Life is expired, because we have pass'd the *utmost* Trial already, yet who knows but *God* may make a farther Trial of *those* in the other Life, upon whom the *great* Experiment of the Gospel was yet *never* made; and therefore since *Providence* can *yet* be infinitely *good* to them notwithstanding their wretched *Condition* at present, and since for all we know it *will* be so, we ought not to object against it its *present* Disregard of them, till we see the *final* Issue of Things; for that their *present* Condition is so *bad*, is no *ground* for us to argue against *Providence*, unless we were sure it would *never* be *better*; because for all we know it may *yet* be render'd good enough not only to *justify*, but to *glorify* the Goodness of God's *Providence* towards them.

And now to conclude this *great* Argument. Since we see how *necessary* the Belief of *Providence* is to our being *truly Religious*, and what *unanswerable Evidence* there is of the *Truth* and *Reality* of it, what remains but that we heartily endeavour by a *calm, fixt,* and *impartial* Consideration of these Things, thorowly to *instruct* our selves in the *Nature*, and firmly to *establish* our selves in the *Belief* of it: For our Religion must necessarily *ebb* or *flow* according as it is influenced *more* or *less* by our *Understanding* and *Belief* of the *divine Providence*, which are the great Principles that *move* and *govern* it. For every Branch of the divine Providence is an inexhaustible Fountain of religious *Rhetorick* and *Persuasion*, and in this *single* Proposition, that God *upholds* and *governs* the World, there are a thousand Times *more* Inducements to Piety and Virtue, than in all *other* Topicks in the World. But how *pregnant* soever it is with Arguments, and how powerful soever its Arguments are, 'tis impossible it should prevail upon any reasonable Mind that *understands* not the *Force*, and *believes* not the *Truth* of it: for all the *possible* Access which *outward* Objects have to our Minds, is thro' our *Knowledge* and *Belief* of them, without which the most *momentous* Proposals are no more capable of *affecting* us, than one of *Tully*'s *Orations* is of calming the North-wind; but he who firmly *believes* the *Truth*, and *understands* the full *Emphasis* of a *divine Providence*, must necessarily be affected by it, if he be but within the *Reach* and *Power* of *Persuasion*; and unless his Will be *impregnably* fortified against all the Force of *Argument* and *Reason*, he will find himself so *besieged* with Motives on every side persuading him to submit to the *Obligations* of Religion, that it will be almost impossible for him to *defend* himself against their *powerful* Importunities. For what Man in his Wits can sit *unconcerned* under the lively Belief that he is in the Hands of a most *just* and *gaacious, all-wise*, and *almighty Providence*, that is conscious to his inmost *Thoughts* and *Purposes*, and beholds all his Actions with infinite *Complacency* or *Abhorrence*; that hath the Disposal of his *Life* and his *Soul*, and of all the *Goods* he can hope for, and all the Evils he can *fear*, and will certainly *reward* him a thousand-fold if he doth *well*, and if he doth *ill* as certainly pursue him with a dire *Revenge*? This Belief carries with it such constraining *Terrors* and *Allurements* as cannot but *affect* all reasonable Minds, and finally *prevail* with their *Hopes* and *Fears* against all contrary *Temptations*. Wherefore if ever we would *fix* the Obligations of Religion upon our Minds, it concerns us above all Things to be thorowly *instructed* in the *Nature*, and *confirmed* in the *Belief* of the divine Providence.

CHAP. V.

Of the Necessity of believing divine Rewards *and* Punishments, *in order to our being* truly Religious.

HUman Nature is framed to move upon the Hinges of *Hope* and *Fear*, and to be *elicited* and *drawn forth* in Action either by the Proposal of some *attainable* Good, or Prospect of some *avoidable* Evil, the former of which begets *Hope* in us, and that *Pursuit*; the *latter* Fear, and that *Flight* and *Avoidance*; and accordingly, we find all Laws address to the *Hopes* and *Fears* of Men with Proposals of *Reward* and *Punishment*, as to the *Master-springs* and *Principles* of their Action, by which they are moved to *do* or *forbear* according as they are required and enjoined. And, indeed, to give *Laws* to Men without enforcing them with *Rewards* and *Punishments*, would be to leave it *indifferent* whether they obeyed them or no, which is *inconsistent* with the Nature of Laws: for Laws *necessarily* imply an *Obligation* to Obedience; but what Obligation could we have to obey them, did they leave it *indifferent*, as to any Good or Evil accruing from it, whether we *obey'd* them or *no*? for if it will be as well

for us *one* way as *t'other*, what matter is it which way we determine our ſelves? And this holds good in nothing more than in the Matter of our Obedience to the Laws of *Religion*, to which our corrupt Nature is above all Things *backward* and *averſe*; all that *ſpiritual Exerciſe* which thoſe *Laws* require being quite againſt the Grain of our *earthy* and *ſenſual* Inclinations; ſo that were we not *drawn* to it by the *Hope* of *Good*, and *driven* by the *Fear* of *Evil*, to be ſure our own *bad* Natures would keep us at an *eternal* Diſtance from it; but unleſs we believe God to be a *Rewarder* of thoſe that obey, and a Puniſher of thoſe that *deſpiſe* him, we have no ground to hope for any *Good*, or to dread any *Evil* at his Hands.

For unleſs we believe that he will *crown* thoſe that *ſerve* him with ſome *Mark* of his *Favour*, how can we think he is *pleaſed* with them; there being no *other* way for him to expreſs his being *pleaſed*, but by crowning them with ſome *ſignal* Reward; and if he be *not* pleaſed with thoſe that *ſerve* him, to be ſure he is not *diſpleaſed* with thoſe that *neglect* him; and if he be not *diſpleaſed* with them, what Reaſon have we to apprehend that he will *puniſh* 'em? Thus the *Unbelief* of God's being a *Rewarder* of thoſe that *obey* him, draws after it an *Unbelief* of his being a *Puniſher* of thoſe that *deſpiſe* him, and ſo on the contrary. For unleſs we believe him to be ſo much *concerned* for his Service as to *puniſh* thoſe that *neglect* it, we have no *reaſon* to think he is ſo much concerned for it as to *reward* thoſe that *embrace* it. So that the *Belief* and *Unbelief* of God's being a *Rewarder* and a *Puniſher*, do by neceſſary *Conſequence* mutually imply each other; and unleſs we believe *Both*, there is no Reaſon we ſhould believe *Either*. And when our Nature is ſo *averſe*, as it is, to his Service; what ſhould *induce* us to *ſerve* him when we expect no *Good* from him, or *hinder* us from *ſlighting* him when we fear no *Evil*? And what is there can *bring us home* to God when we are *carried* away from him with an *impetuous* Tide of *corrupt* Inclinations, and have neither *Hope* nor *Fear* to bound or reſtrain it? So that conſidering the *Averſation* of our Nature to God's Service, it is morally impoſſible we ſhould ever be heartily *reconciled* to it without being drawn with the *Hope* of Reward, or driven with the *Fear* of Puniſhment.

In the Proſecution of this Argument, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew,

Firſt, How *far* it's neceſſary that our *Belief* of divine *Rewards* and *Puniſhments* ſhould *extend*.

Secondly, What *Evidence* there is to induce us to *believe* them.

Thirdly, By what *Means* this is to be *begotten* and *confirmed*.

SECT. I.

How far *it is neceſſary that our* Belief *of divine* Rewards *and* Puniſhments *ſhould* extend.

FOR, to induce us to ſubmit to the Obligations of Religion, it is by no means *ſufficient* that we believe in the *general* that God will *reward* us if we do well, and *puniſh* us if we do wickedly. For this we may *firmly* believe, and yet at the ſame Time prefer the *Pleaſures* of Sin as much *greater* Goods than the *Rewards* of Virtue, and dread the *Difficulties* of Virtue as much *greater* Evils than the *Puniſhments* of Sin; wherefore to render our Belief of divine Rewards and Puniſhments an *effectual* Principle of Religion, theſe four Things are neceſſary.

Firſt, That we ſhould believe that God is ſo *far* a Rewarder of thoſe that ſerve him, and ſo *far* a Puniſher of thoſe that neglect him, as to make a *plain* and *ſenſible* Diſtinction between them.

Secondly, Conſidering how *promiſcuouſly* the Goods and Evils of this World are *diſtributed* among Good and Bad Men, it's neceſſary we ſhould believe, That there is a *future* State of Rewards and Puniſhments.

Thirdly, It is neceſſary we ſhould believe thoſe *future* Rewards and Puniſh-

ments to be such as do *infinitely* transcend any Good we can *reap* by our Sins, and any Evil we can *incur* by doing our Duty.

Fourthly, It is necessary we should believe that there is no *other* way for us to *avoid* those Punishments but by *forsaking* our Sins, or to *acquire* those Rewards, but by *submitting* to our Duty.

I. It is necessary we should believe that God is so *far* a Rewarder of those that serve, and so *far* a Punisher of those that neglect him, as to make a *plain* and *sensible* Distinction between them. For unless we believe that God makes *some* Distinction between those that *serve* and those that *neglect* him, we shall *confound* Good and Evil in our own Apprehensions, and look upon all human Actions as *indifferent*, and thereby dissolve all the *Ties* and *Obligations* of Religion. For Things are in *themselves*, as they are in the *Judgment* and *Esteem* of God, who cannot be *mistaken* in estimating their Natures; and therefore unless there be some Distinction between *Men* and *Men*, and *Actions* and *Actions* in the Esteem of *God*, they must be all *alike* and *indifferent* in their *own* Natures. And if all Actions are indifferent in *themselves*, we are *free* from all the Ties and Obligations of Religion; and 'tis left *indifferent* to us, whether we will *worship* God or *blaspheme* him: So that unless we believe that *God* makes some *Distinction* between the *Good* and *Bad*, Religion can have no force *at all* upon our Minds.

But now there is no other way for God to *distinguish* between *Men* and *Men*, but by *Rewarding* and *Punishing* them; because if he make any Distinction in his *Affections* between us, we may be sure his *Love* will incline him to *reward*, and his *Hatred* to *punish* us; and since 'tis as *easy* to him to *follow* his Inclination as *not*, since he can reward where he loves, and punish where he hates, without any *Disturbance* to his own *Happiness*, what should *hinder* him from doing it, supposing that he really *loves* or *hates*, or makes *any* Distinction in his Affections between those that *serve* and those that *neglect* him? So that unless he reward the *one* and punish the *other*, he can make no *visible* Distinction in his Affections between them. If he be *contrarily* affected to good and bad Men, his *Affections* will infallibly appear in his *Actions*; but if he use them *alike*, it is plain they are *alike* to him. So that unless we believe that God *distinguishes* between *good* and *bad* Men by *rewarding* and *punishing* them, we must look upon both as *indifferent* to him, and believe that he concerns himself neither with the *one* nor the *other*; and if we think it is *indifferent* to *God* whether we are *good* or *bad*, to be sure it will not be indifferent to *us*, whose Natures are so *biassed* with *bad* Inclinations, which, having neither Hope nor Fear to *restrain* them, will run towards *bad* Objects without *Rub* or *Interruption*. And what likelihood is there that *we* who are so *prone* and *inclinable* to Evil, should *concern* our selves in the Service of God, whilst we look upon it as a Thing *indifferent* to him whether we *serve* him or *no*?

Wherefore, to the *subduing* our Minds to the Obligations of Religion, it is necessary we should believe that God is so *far* a Rewarder of Good, and Punisher of bad Men, as to make a *sensible* Distinction between them, and demonstrate that he is *differently* affected towards them. For to what end should we serve a God that takes *no notice* of us, that *regards* not what we do, but sits above in the Heavens as an *unconcerned* Spectator of our Actions? Why should we *cross* our own Inclinations, and *forsake* our beloved Lusts, for his Sake, when it is altogether *indifferent* to him *what* we do, or *whither* we go, or what *becomes* of us?

II. Considering how *promiscuously* the Goods and Evils of this Life are *distributed* among *good* and *bad* Men, it is necessary that we should believe there is a *future* State of Rewards and Punishments. For tho *sometimes* in *this* Life God rewards Good Men, and punishes Bad with such *signal* and *remarkable* Goods and Evils as are sufficient Indications of the vast Distinction he makes between

between them, yet this is *Extraordinary*, and besides the *constant* and *regular* Course of his Providence, which for *wise* and *excellent* Ends and Purposes doth ordinarily *scatter* Good and Evil among Men with an *open* and *undistinguishing* Hand; insomuch that as the wise Man observes, Eccl. 9. 1, 2, 3. *No Man knoweth either Love or Hatred by all that is before him; all Things come alike to all, there is one Event to the Righteous and to the Wicked, and as is the Good so is the Sinner, and he that sweareth as he that feareth an Oath: This is an evil among all Things that are done under the Sun, that there is one Event to all.* Since therefore God's *Love* of good Men and *Hatred* of Bad, appears not by any Thing *before us*, we must either conclude that they are *both* indifferent to him, which would be to *rase* the very *Foundations* of Religion, or that there is a *future* State of Rewards and Punishments, wherein there will be no more such *promiscuous* Distributions, no more such *cross Coupling* of Prosperity with *Vice*, and Misery with *Virtue*, but all Things will be adjusted *suitably* to Mens *Deserts* and *Qualifications*, and those that are Good *advanced* to immortal Glory and Honour, and those that are Bad *deprest* into eternal Shame and Confusion. For the Difference which God makes between them, in the *present* Course of his Providence, is too *small* and *indiscernable* to induce us to believe that he makes *any* Difference between them in his *Esteem* and *Affection*; and therefore either we must believe that there is *another* State wherein he makes a *far wider* Difference between them, or conclude that they are both *indifferent* to him, and that he hath no more Regard to the *one* than the *other*, or that he hath no Regard at all to *either*, which, as I shewed before, utterly *dissolves* the Obligations of Religion.

III. It is necessary we should believe those future Rewards and Punishments to be *such* as do infinitely *transcend* any Good we can *reap* in our sinful *Neglect* of God, and any Evil we can *incur* by our *Submission* to him. 'Tis true, were our Natures *equally* inclined to *submit to* or *neglect* him, we should need *no more* Good and Evil to move us *one* way than *t'other*; but the *same* Proportion of *Goods* and *Evils* which tempts us now to *forsake* and *abandon* him, would equally tempt us to *serve* and *obey* him: But alas! this is far from *our* Case; for in *submitting* to God, we move *counter* to our selves, we *cross* the *Grain* of our *degenerate* Nature, and *run away* from our dearest Inclinations; whereas in *forsaking* him, we *row* with the *Tide*, and are *driven on* with an *impetuous* Current of sinful Lusts and Affections; and the Case being thus, the Temptations of the *one* side *must* be incomparably *greater*, if ever they prevail with us, than they *need* be on the *other*. For Men are *easily* tempted to act in *compliance* with their *own* Inclinations; and the *smallest* Goods or Evils that can be proposed unto 'em from without, will readily *induce* 'em to do what they have a *mind to*; but to *prevail* with a Man to do that which he is extremely *averse* to, to act *against* Nature, and live in *defiance* with his own Inclinations, requires a *mighty* Force of *outward* Temptation; and it must be a very *great* Good that he will not *lose*, a very *formidable* Evil that he will not *incur*, rather than enter into any Course of Action that is *irksome* and *ungrateful* to his Nature. So that unless we believe the *Goods* and *Evils* of the *other* World to be *incomparably* greater than all the *Pleasures* of Sin, and all the *Sufferings* of Piety and Virtue, there will not be Force *enough* in our Faith to *persuade* us; because *those* future Goods and Evils move *against* Nature, and persuade us to a Course of Life we are extremely *averse* to, whereas *these* present ones *join Hands* with our Inclinations, and find a ready *Concurrence* in our Wills and Affections; and a very *small* Temptation will prevail against a *great* One, when it hath Nature, that *Bosom orator*, to *solicit* and *plead for* it. Wherefore unless we believe the *Rewards* and *Punishments* of the *future* State to be such as *infinitely* out-weigh those *present* Goods and Evils that tempt us to Sin, they will never be able to prevail against 'em; because they must not only out-tempt *them*, but, which is the much harder Task of the two, they must out-tempt the *Reluctancies* of our *degenerate* Nature; and yet for *future* Goods and Evils to out-tempt *present* ones is not so *easy* a Matter neither; especially if *those* future ones

are *invisible* and out of the Ken of our *Sense*; which is the Case here. For *Futurity* lessens all Objects to the *Mind*, even as *Distance* doth to the *Eye*, and makes Things appear to us much *smaller* than they are in their *own* Natures: So that the *Futurity* of the Rewards and Punishments of the *other* Life, are a mighty *Disadvantage* to 'em when they stand in Competition with *present* Goods and Evils; because the *latter* appear to us in their *full* Proportion and Magnitude, with *all* their tempting Circumstances about 'em, whereas the *former*, exhibit to us a *dim* and *confused* Landskip of Things *afar off*, of Things which we never *saw* nor *felt*, and which by Reason of their *Distance* imprint very *dark* Ideas on our Minds. And as their Futurity *lessens* their Appearance, and renders it *confused* and *indistinct*, so their Invisibility *weakens* their *Force* and *Influence* on our Minds, which no Objects can so *nearly* affect as those that strike upon our *Senses*. So that unless by an *immense* Magnitude they *compensate* for being *future* and *insensible*, it is impossible they should prevail with such Minds as *ours* against *present* and *sensible* Goods and Evils. Wherefore to render our Belief of a future State *effectual* to reduce us to God and our Duty, it's *absolutely* necessary we should believe the *Rewards* and *Punishments* of it to be *infinitely greater* than all the *Goods* and *Evils* that can tempt us to Sin; and that not only because our Natures are extremely *averse* to that which *these* Rewards and Punishments tempt us to, but because the *Goods* and *Evils* which tempt us the *contrary* way, have the *prevailing* Advantages of being *present* and *sensible*.

IV. And lastly, It is necessary we should believe that there is no *other* way for us to *acquire* these Rewards, or *avoid* these Punishments, but by *submitting* to the Obligations of Religion. For to be thorowly *convinced* and *perswaded* of the *immense* Rewards and Punishments of the *other* Life, is by no means *sufficient* to reduce us unto God, so long as we do but *dream* of any *possible* Way to *obtain* those Rewards, and to *avoid* those Punishments *without* submitting to *Him*, to which above all *imaginable* Ways our *corrupt* Nature hath the greatest *Antipathy*. So that tho we were never so much *convinced* of the absolute Necessity of *escaping* Hell, and *purchasing* Heaven, yet if at the same Time we have a Prospect of any other Way or Means of effecting it, to be sure we shall shun *this*, this most *ungrateful* one of *forsaking* our Sins and *returning* to God. And if *listing* our selves into *Godly Parties*, or putting on a *demure* and *sanctified* Countenance; if being *moped*, *dejected* or unsociable; if whining or *fasting*, or *long Prayers*, or an *affected* Garb, or *rigid* Observance of holy Times; if consuming our Lives in a *bare-footed* Pilgrimage, or *wearing* a Hair-shirt, or *whipping* our Bodies, or *spending* our Estates on *Masses* and *Indulgencies*; if being made Free of a *holy Confraternity*, or *visiting* Altars and Shrines, or *numbering* Prayers, like Faggots, by a *Tally* of *Beads*; if these or any of these will but secure us of *Heaven*, and from going to *Hell*, we shall think them a thousand Times more *tolerable* and *easy* than to *submit* our Wills to *God* in all the Instances of true *Piety* and *Virtue*; in the doing of which we must *strangle* the corrupt Inclinations of our Nature, *tear* our beloved Lusts from our Hearts, *rack off* our earthly Affections from their Lees, and *refine* and *spiritualize* them into a divine *Zeal*, and *Love* and *Devotion*, than which there is nothing in the World more *irksome* to a *degenerate* Nature. So that till we are reduced to an utter *Despair* of *reaping* the Rewards, and *escaping* the Punishments of the other Life, by any *other* means than *this* of *submitting* our selves to the Obligations of Religion, our *Faith* will be altogether *ineffectual*.

SECT.

SECT. II.

What Evidence *there is to* induce *us to* believe *these future* Rewards *and* Punishments.

THAT there *are* future *Rewards* and *Punishments*, is a Doctrine *universally* assented to by all *Ages*, and *Nations*, and Religions, and there is scarce any *first Principle* in Philosophy, in which Mankind are more *generally* agreed. Thus among the Heathen *Poets*, *Divines*, and *Philosophers*, there is an *unanimous* Acknowledgment of these *future* States, altho their *Descriptions* of them are generally nothing but the *Dreams* of an *extravagant* Fancy. For so, as *Josephus* observes, speaking of the *Essenes* Doctrine concerning the future State of the Blessed, ταῖς μὲν ἀγαθαῖς ψυχαῖς ὁμοδοξοῦντες πᾶσιν Ἑλλήνων, &c. *i. e. they teach, as all the* Greek *Nations also do, that for good Souls there are blessed Seats prepared beyond the Ocean, in a Region that is always free from Rain and Snow, and excessive Heats, being perpetually fanned with gentle Breezes from the Ocean*; which Description he hath translated almost *verbatim* out of the fourth Book of *Homer's Odysses*, where he brings in *Proteus* thus bespeaking *Menelaus*—ἐς ἠλύσιον πεδίον —καὶ πείρατα γαίης, &c. i. e. *The Gods shall send thee to the Fields of* Elysium, *which lie on the utmost Parts of the Earth, where thou shalt live secure and happy, there being neither Rain, nor Snow, nor Winter, but the blessed Inhabitants are perpetually refresh'd with the gentle Breathing of cool Zephyrs from the Ocean.* *Plato* tells us of an antient Law concerning Men, Καὶ ἀεὶ καὶ νῦν ἔτι ἐστὶν ἐν θεοῖς, τῶν ἀνθρώπων τὸν μὲν δικαίως τὸν βίον διελθόντα καὶ ὁσίως, ἐπειδὰν τελευτήσῃ, εἰς μακάρων νήσους ἀπιόντα, οἰκεῖν ἐν πάσῃ εὐδαιμονίᾳ ἐκτὸς κακῶν, τὸν δὲ ἀδίκως καὶ ἀθέως, εἰς τὸ τῆς τίσεώς τε καὶ δίκης δεσμωτήριον, ὃ δὴ τάρταρον καλοῦσιν, ἰέναι, i. e. *which was always and is still in force among the Gods, That those who lived just and holy Lives should, after their Death, go into the Isles of the Blessed, where they should enjoy all manner of Happiness, without the least Intermixture of Misery; but that those who lived here unjustly and ungodly, should be sent into that Prison of just Punishment, which is called Hell,* Plat. Gorg. *p.* 312. Thus also *Tully*, *Tuscul.* lib. 1. *permanere animos arbitramur consensu nationum omnium*, i. e. *We believe, as all Nations do, that the Souls of Men do survive their Bodies*; and to name no more, *Seneca*, *Epist.* 117. tells us, *Cum de animarum æternitate disserimus, non leve momentum apud nos habet consensus omnium aut Timentium inferos, aut Colentium*, i. e. *When we discourse of the Eternity of Souls, the general Consent of all Men, either fearing or worshipping the Hellish Powers, is of very great Moment.* And indeed this Belief of the *future States* being so *generally* imprinted on Mens Minds is a very *probable* Argument of the *Reality* of them; it being hardly *conceivable*, how the Reason of *all* Mankind should have so *unanimously* consented in it, had it not been *extremely* agreeable to the *Make* and *Frame* of our Minds, and we cannot suppose any *false* Proposition to be *agreeable* to the Frame of our Mind, without reflecting *dishonourably* upon the *Truth* of him that framed it. And indeed this Notion of a future State is such, as hath been generally embraced by *those* Persons who are *least* capable of *deducing* it by a *logical* Dependence of *one* Thing upon *another*; and therefore since it hath no *Dependency* in their Minds on any other *antecedent* Notion, how could it have been so *generally* entertain'd, did not the *common* Dictate of Nature or Reason, acting *alike* in all Men, move 'em to *conspire* in it, tho they knew not one another's Minds? For it hath been believed, with a Kind of *Repugnancy* to *Sense*, which discovers all Things round about it to be *Mortal*, and which, upon that Account would have been too apt to have seduced *ruder* Minds into a Disbelief of any *other* State; had not some more *powerful* Impression on their Souls *forcibly* urged them to believe it.

But because this Argument, drawn from *universal Consent*, is liable to some little Exception, I shall not *insist* upon it, but endeavour to prove the Reality of this future State of Rewards and Punishments from these Topicks.

First.

First, From the *Wisdom* of God's *Government.*
Secondly, From the *Justice* of his *Providence.*
Thirdly, From the *natural Capacity* of our Souls to *survive* our Bodies, and to *enjoy* future Rewards, and *suffer* future Punishments.
Fourthly, From the *natural Expectance* we have of future Rewards, and *Dread* of future Punishments.
Fifthly, From the excellent *Frame* and *Structure* of human Nature.
Sixthly, From the *Testimony* of the *Christian Religion.*

I. From the *Wisdom* of God's *Government.* That *Mankind* is under the *Government* of God, is evident from that Law which he hath *imprinted* on our Nature, by which our Actions are *distinguished* into *Good* and *Evil, Virtuous* and *Vicious*; of which sufficient Proof hath been given, *Chap.* 1. And since God hath *given a Law* to our Natures, there is no doubt to be made but he hath taken sufficient Care to *enforce* the *Observance* of it by *Rewards* and *Punishments,* otherwise his Government over us would be very *insecure* and *precarious.* For that *Lawgiver* doth only *petition* his Subjects to *obey,* who doth not *promise* such *Rewards* and *denounce* such *Penalties* as are sufficient to *oblige* them thereunto.

But now there is no *Reward* can be *sufficient* to oblige us to *obey,* which doth not abundantly *compensate* any *Loss* or *Evil* we may *sustain* by our *Obedience*; no *Punishment* sufficient to *deter* us from *disobeying,* that doth not far *surmount* all the *Benefits* and *Pleasures* which we can hope to *reap* from our *Disobedience*: But unless there be a *future* State, the Law of Nature can propose no *such* Rewards and Punishments to us. For if we have nothing to *dread* or *hope for* beyond the *Grave,* our *present* Interest is *all* our Concern, and in Reason we ought to judge Things to be *Good* or *Evil,* according as they *promote* or *obstruct* our *temporal* Happiness. Now tho it is certain that in the *general* there is a *natural* Good accruing to us from all *virtuous* Actions; as on the *contrary* a *natural* Evil from all *vitious* ones; and it is *ordinarily* more conducive to our *temporal* Interest to *obey* than to *disobey* the Law of our Natures; yet there are a World of *Instances* wherein Vice may be more *advantageous* to us than Virtue, *abstracted* from the Rewards and Punishments of *another* Life. It is *ordinarily* better for me to be an *honest* Man than a *Knave,* it is more for my *Reputation,* and *usually* for my *Profit* too; and it is more for the *publick Good* in which my *own* is involved; but yet in *several* Circumstances it may be better for me with respect only to *this* World to be a *Knave* than an *honest* Man. For whensoever I can cheat so *secretly* and *securely* as not to fall under the *publick* Lash, nor impair my *Reputation,* and I can *gain* more by the *Cheat* than I shall *lose* in the Damage of the *Publick,* it will be doubtless more *advantagious* for me, as to my *worldly* Interest, to *cheat* than to be *honest*; and how often such *fair* Opportunities of *Cozenage* do occur, no Man can be insensible that hath but the *least* Insight into the Affairs of this World. So that if there were no *future* Rewards and Punishments, this great *Law* of *Righteousness* would not have Force enough *universally* to oblige us; because there are a World of Instances wherein we might *gain* more *Good* and *eschew* more *Evil* by doing *unrighteously,* than all its *present* Rewards and Punishments do amount to. And the same may be said of all *other* Laws of Nature, which without the *great* Motives of *future* Happiness and Misery can no *longer* induce Men to obey 'em than it is for their *temporal* Interest to do so. For suppose I can secretly *stab* or *poison* a Man whom I *hate* or *dread,* or from whose Death I may reap any considerable *Advantage,* what should *restrain* me from it? If you say the *Law of Nature,* pray what *Reward* doth the Law of Nature *propose* that is sufficient to *compensate* for the *Dissatisfaction* of my *Revenge,* or for the *Danger* I run in suffering my *Enemy* to live; or what *Punishment* doth the Law of Nature *denounce* that can *balance* the *Advantage* of a Thousand, or perhaps ten Thousand Pounds a Year that may accrue to me by his Death?

If you ſay the Law of Nature *propoſes* to me the Reward of a *quiet* and *ſatisfied* Mind, and *denounces* the Puniſhment of a *guilty* and *amazed* Conſcience; I eaſily anſwer, that this *Peace* and *Horror* which is conſequent to the *Forbearance* or *Commiſſion* of Sin, ariſes from the *Hope* and *Dread* of *future* Rewards and Puniſhments, which being taken away, to *ſin* or *not* ſin will be *indifferent* as to any *Peace* or *Horror* that can follow upon it; and when *this* Reſtraint is taken off, what *Conſideration* will there be left that is ſufficient to *withhold* me from the *bloody* Fact, whenever I have an Opportunity to act it *ſecurely*, and am *furiouſly* ſpurred on to it by my own *Revenge* and *Covetouſneſs*? So that if there be no Rewards and Puniſhments in *another* Life, to *enforce* the Commands of the Law of Nature, it's certain that there are no ſuch annex'd to it in *this*, as are *univerſally* ſufficient to *oblige* us to obſerve them. For as for the Goods and Evils of *this* Life, they are *ordinarily* diſtributed among Men with ſo little *Reſpect* and *Diſcrimination*, as not only to *occaſion* but to *juſtify* that famous Obſervation of the wiſe Man, that *all Things happen alike to all.* Either therefore there are *other* Goods to be hoped for, and *other* Evils to be feared, or there are a World of *Caſes* wherein God hath not *ſufficiently* provided to *ſecure* our Obedience to the *Law* of our *Nature*; and to imagine that God ſhould *give* a Law to his Creatures, and take no care to ſecure the *Authority* of it, is a moſt *ſenſeleſs* Blaſphemy of the *Wiſdom* of his *Government*; for this would be to *expoſe* his own Authority to *Contempt*, and to *caſt* his Laws at the *Feet* of his Creatures to be *ſpurned* and *trampled* on by them at their Pleaſure.

If it be objected, that all that this Argument proves, is, that to *ſecure* our *Obedience* to the Law of Nature, it's *neceſſary* we ſhould *believe* that there are future Rewards and Puniſhments; but that it doth not hence follow that 'tis *neceſſary* that there ſhould *be* future Rewards and Puniſhments; becauſe whether there *be* any ſuch Things or *no*, our *Belief* of 'em will be *ſufficient* to *ſecure* the Authority of the Law: I anſwer, That if our *Belief* of future Rewards and Puniſhments be *neceſſary*, one of theſe two Things muſt inevitably follow; either that the Objects of our Belief are *real*, which is the Thing I am proving, or that, to *countenance* the Authority of his Laws, it's neceſſary for God to *impoſe* upon our Faith, and *deceive* us into the Belief of a *Falſhood*. For if to *enforce* God's Law, it's neceſſary we ſhould *believe* that there are future Rewards and Puniſhments, either there muſt *be* ſuch Things *really exiſting*, or God muſt enforce his Law with *our* Belief of a Falſhood; and to imagine, that when God *might* have created for us a *future* State of Reward and Puniſhment, if he had ſo *pleaſed*, and governed us by the *Hopes* and *Fears* of it, he hath rather choſen to govern us by *Tricks* and *Lies*, and to *wheedle* us into Obedience by a *Cheat* and *Deluſion*, is a Blaſphemy no leſs *ſenſeleſs* than *horrid.* Since therefore to *ſecure* the Authority of that Law by which the human Nature is to be governed, it is neceſſary that it ſhould be *enforced* with the Motives of *everlaſting* Reward and Puniſhment, one of theſe three Things *neceſſarily* follows; either that God hath not ſufficiently enforc'd his Law, which is a *foul* Imputation on his *Wiſdom*, or that he is *fain* to enforce it with a *Lye*, which is an *impious* Reflection on his *Truth*, or that there *are* everlaſting Rewards and Puniſhments.

II. From the *Juſtice* of the divine *Providence.* For if there *be* a divine *Providence* preſiding over the World, (as, that there *is*, hath been already ſufficiently proved) *Juſtice* and *Equity*, which is the moſt *glorious* Perfection of an *over-ruling Power*, muſt neceſſarily be *included* in the Notion of it. For without *Juſtice*, over-ruling Power is nothing but an *impotent Tyranny*, which to attribute to God, is far more *diſhonourable* and *incongruous* to the Nature of his Perfections, than to ſtrip him of *all* Providence, as *Epicurus* did, and ſhut him up in the Heavens in a State of everlaſting *Sloth* and *Luxury*. For *not* to govern, is only to *do Nothing*; but to govern without *Juſtice*, is to do *Miſchief*:

Mischief; and 'tis a much *less* Derogation from the Perfection of any Being, to suppose it to be *Idle* than to suppose it to be *Mischievous*. So that allowing that God, who is the most *perfect* of all Beings, *governs* the World, it would be not only *Blasphemous*, but *Nonsense* to imagine that he governs it *unjustly*. Now the proper *Justice* of *Government* consists in the *Equality* of its *Distributions*; for since there is such a Thing as *immutable* Good and Evil in the Actions of *free* and *reasonable* Agents, it is naturally *fit* and *due*, that those who *do* Good should *receive* Good, and those who do Evil, Evil from *their* Hands who have the *Government* of Actions; and this *proportionable* to the *Good* and *Evil* of their Doings. So that God's *governing* the World *justly* consists in *distributing* Good to those that do Good, and Evil to those that do Evil, or in other Words, in *proportioning* Rewards and Punishments to Men according to the *Good* and *Evil* he finds in their *Actions*; and unless we suppose him to do *this*, it is *Nonsense* to imagine that he governs the World.

But if all his Distributions are confin'd to *this* Life, and there is neither Reward nor Punishment to be expected from him in *another*, there are *infinite* Instances of his Providence wherein it will be impossible to *defend* his *Equality* and *Justice*. For if there be no other Scene of *Good* and *Evil*, *Reward* and *Punishment*, but only *this* Life, all the *afflicted good* and *prosperous bad* Men that ever were in the World, of which there are *infinite* Instances, are so many *reproachful* Monuments of the *woful* Inequality of the divine Government. For how many Millions of *brave* Souls have there been, who have thought nothing too *dear* for God and his Service, and have *sacrificed* their Lusts, their Lives and their Fortunes to him, and yet upon *this* Supposal have reaped no other *Recompence* for so doing but only a *miserable* Life, and a *woful* Death, and an obscure *dishonourable* Grave? As, on the contrary, how many Millions of Millions of *wicked* Men that have lived in open *Defiance* to all that is Sacred, and Just, and Good, *blaspheme'd* God, *affronted* his Authority, and *trampled* upon all the Laws of his Government, and yet, supposing there is no *other* Life, have undergone no *other Punishment* for so doing but to live *prosperously*, and die *quietly*, and lie *enshrined* in a marble Monument? Now, how can we otherwise *apologize* for the *Justice* of Providence, when it thus *cross-couples* Prosperity with Vice, and Adversity with Virtue, but only by supposing this *present* Life to be only the State of our *Trial* and *Probation*, which will quickly *determine* in our *everlasting* Recompence or Punishment, according as we *behave* and acquit our selves in it; upon which Supposal the *Justice* of Providence may be fairly *accounted for*, were the *present* Distributions of it a Thousand Times more *unequal* than they *are*? For *then* we need not wonder that good and bad Men are at *present* so *unequally* treated, since *now* they are only upon their *Proof* and *Trial*, which, as I have shewn before, requires *such* a Treatment; but their *Reward* and *Punishment* is reserved for *another* State, wherein all these *seeming* Inequalities shall be fairly *adjusted*, and Virtue shall be *crowned* with everlasting *Glory* and *Pleasure*, and Vice *damn'd* to eternal *Horror* and *Confusion*. But if the Goods and Evils of this *present* Life, are *all* the Reward and Punishment that good and bad Men are to expect, where is the *Justice* of the divine Government, that many Times *oppresses* its Friends, and *advances* its Enemies, and in the Conclusion *extinguishes* their Beings *together*, and therewith all *Possibility* of making any *future Retribution* of Good to the one, or Evil to the other? And therefore if it be *true*, that *the Judge of all the world will do righteously*, that *first* or *last* he will certainly distribute his Rewards and Punishments to his Subjects according to the *Merit* and *Demerit* of their Actions, it must be *as* true, that for the *main* he hath *reserved* the doing it to a *future* State, since it cannot be denied but that at *present* he very often doth the quite *contrary*: And if it be but as evident that there is *such* a future State, as it is that God governs the World *justly*, I think 'tis as *fair* an Assurance of it as any *modest* Man can require.

III. From

III. From the *natural Capacity* of our Souls to *survive* our Bodies, and *enjoy* future Rewards, and *suffer* future Punishments, it also follows that there *is* a future State of Reward and Punishment. For we find in our Souls a certain innate *Force* and *Power*, whereby they *determine* themselves which way they please in their *Motions* and *Operations*; whereby they are exempt from the *necessitating* Influence of any Thing that is *foreign* to them; and this innate *Liberty* or *Power* of *Self-determination* is necessarily supposed in the Management of *all* human Affairs; in *Commerce* and *Treaties*, in *Government*, and *Laws*, and *Administrations of Justice*, in *Counsels*, *Admonitions*, *Reproofs* and *Persuasions*: In all which, Applications are made to our *Souls* as to *free* and *self-determining* Agents, that have the *absolute* Disposal of their *own* Motions, and can *direct* them which way they *please*; and indeed were not our Souls left to their own free *Disposal*, but *concluded* by the Laws of a *fatal* Necessity, as we see all *material* Agents are, such Applications to them as *these*, would be very *absurd* and *ridiculous*; and we may as reasonably hope to *tame* Wolves and Tigers by reading *Ethicks* to them, or to *still* the North-wind by sending *Ambassadors* to him to propose Articles of Peace, as to *prevail* upon Mens Minds by *moral* Addresses and Persuasions; because if they are not *Masters* of their own *Choices*, whatsoever the rigid Laws of *Necessity* determine them to, they must necessarily *choose* in despite of all *Persuasions* to the contrary.

Now by this *self-determining* Power our Souls do evidently manifest themselves to be *immaterial* Substances, and consequently not liable to *Death* and *Corruption*. For if they were *Matter* they would be moved like *Matter*, *i. e.* by the *Pressure* or *Thrusting* of other Matter upon them; and it would be no *more* in their Power to move any *other* way, than that which some other Matter *presses* and *impels* them, than it is for a Stone not to move *upwards* when 'tis *impell'd* by the Force which your Arm *impresses* on it, and not to move down again when that Force is *spent*, and 'tis *press'd back* by its own *Weight* and *Gravity*. Whereas we feel in our Soul an *innate* Power to *determine* it self which way it *pleases*, and even to move quite *contrary* to all *foreign* Impressions. For when 'tis press'd on by *outward* Objects, to such and such *Thoughts* and *Purposes* with all imaginable *Vigor*, it often *stems* the impetuous Tide, and *thinks* and *purposes* the quite *contrary*. How then can that be *Matter* which is not *determined* in its Motions by *Matter*, but when it *pleases* can either move counter to *all* material Impressions, or of *two* material Impressions, can move counter to the *strongest*?

That our Souls therefore are *immaterial*, is just as evident as that they have *Liberty of Will*; and that they have Liberty of Will, needs no other Proof than the common *Sense* and *Feeling* of Mankind. And whatsoever Essence *feels* this Freedom *within* itself, whereby it is absolved from the *rigid* Laws of *Matter*, may with all the reason in the World conclude itself *immaterial*; and if our Souls are immaterial Substances, to be sure they can *naturally* subsist and live *without* these Bodies, and must *necessarily* do so unless God *destroys* them, as having no *contrary* Qualities or *divisible* Parts, no Principles of *Death* or *Corruption* in 'em; and since God hath made our Soul of an *immaterial* and *immortal* Nature, we have all the Reason in the World to conclude that he will not *unravel* his own Workmanship, but permit it to *survive* its Body, and *enjoy* or *endure* that *happy* or *miserable* Fate which itself hath *chosen* and *made*.

IV. From the *natural Expectance* we have of future Rewards, and *Dread* of future Punishments, it is also evident that there *is* a State of future Rewards and Punishments. Thus after the Commission of any *flagitious* Wickedness, there *naturally* arise *ill Abodings* in Mens Minds of a *dire* After-reckoning; and tho the Commission be *secret* and *conceal'd* from all human Cognizance, so that there is no Reason to *dread* the Corrections of *publick Justice* for it, yet whenever the Man *reflects* on it, it fills his Mind with *horrible* Presages of a *woful* Futurity; as, on the contrary, whenever a Man doth any *great* Good, or conquers any *violent* Temptation to Evil, it *lifts up* his Soul into a *blessed* Expectation, and *swells* his Hope with the *Promise* of a future Reward; and

tho the Good he hath *done*, or the Evil he hath *avoided*, gives him no kind of Prospect of any *present* Advantage, yet his Mind is *soothed* and *ravished* with the Contemplation of it, which naturally *suggests* to him the *joyous* Hopes of a Recompence to come. For, whence should this *Hope* and *Dread* spring up in Mens Minds upon the Commission of *good* and *bad* Actions, but from some *common Impression* upon human Nature, intimating to us a *future* State of Reward and Punishment? If you say, 'tis from those *religious* Principles which we *imbibe* in our Education, I would fain know how came this Principle concerning the future State to be so *universally* imbibed, if there were not something in it that is very *agreeable* with the Reason of *all* Mankind? For, whatever is the matter, we see 'tis very *easily* embraced, but very *difficultly* parted with; Mens Minds do *catch* at it with a strange kind of *Greediness*, but when once they have *swallow'd* it, it never comes up again without *Straining* and *Violence*; and what should be the Reason of this, if there were not something in it that is very *agreeable* with the natural *Taste* and *Relish* of our *Understandings*? We know there have been *great* Wits and Philosophers that have taken as much Pains to *rase* the Belief of a future State *out* of Mens Minds as ever any others did to *imprint* it there; and yet tho their Doctrine hath been always highly *befriended* by Mens wicked *Lusts* and *Affections*, to which the Belief of a future State is the most *terrible* and *vexatious* Thing in the World, yet with all their *Wit* and *Sophistry* they have never been able to *root it out* of Mens Minds. If then our *Hopes* and *Fears* of another World be *merely* owing to our *Teaching* and *Education*, why should not teaching *erase* as well as *imprint* them; especially when it is so *powerfully* seconded with all the *Bosom-Rhetorick* of *Mens vitious* Inclinations? Whereas on the contrary, those who have most *industriously* attempted to *extinguish* their Sense of another World, have generally been very *unsuccessful*; and tho in the *Riot* of their *sinful* Delights, they many Times *charm* and *stupify* it for the present, yet no sooner do they *retire* into themselves, and *coolly* reflect upon their own Minds, but it presently *awakes* again, and *haunts* and *pursues* them; and tho they use all *imaginable* ways to *divert* their Minds from the Thoughts of *another* World, and, to avoid these Bosom *Accusers* and *Tormentors*, run for Sanctuary to all Things *without* them, to *Sports* and *Recreations*, to *Wine* and *Women*, to *Care* and *Business*, yet still they *pursue* them, and ever and anon *break* in upon them, and *scare* and *terrify* them; and because their Minds are so *haunted* with these importunate Terrors of the *World to come*, they are afraid to look *inwards*, but are fain to live *abroad* in their own Defence, as not daring to trust themselves *alone* with themselves; all which are plain *Presages* of a *future* Judgment and Vengeance that *awaits* wicked Souls after *this* Life. For if this Dread of future Punishment be *natural* to us, (as its sticking so *closely* and *universally* to human Nature plainly argues it is) it must be *impress'd* on us by the great *Author* of Nature; and for him to impress a Passion on us which hath no *real* Object, would be to impose a *Cheat* upon our Natures, and *abuse* our Minds with a *false* Alarm. So that either we must suppose that God hath implanted in our Natures a *Dread* of that which *is not*, which is a *dishonourable* Reflection on his *Truth* and *Veracity*; or that there is *really* a future Punishment answerable to *that* Dread.

And as the *Dread* of future Punishment is *natural* to us when we do *ill*, so the *Desire* and *Expectance* of future Reward is *no less* natural to us when we do *well*. For I dare boldly say, there never was any *virtuous* Man, of whatsoever *Nation* or *Religion*, or *Sect of Philosophers*, whose Mind hath not been winged with *earnest* Hopes and Desires of a *future* Happiness, and there is none, that ever yet either *denied* or *despair'd* of it, but only such as have first *debauched* the very Principles of their Nature. For such, it's evident, were the *Sadducees* and *Epicureans*, Sects of Men that had *drowned* all that was *human* in 'em in *Sensuality* and *Voluptuousness*, and are *branded* upon Record for their shameful Indulgence to their own *brutish* Genius; and such are no *Standards* of human Nature, but ought rather to be look'd upon as *Monsters* of Men.

And

And therefore as we do not judge of the natural *Figures* and *Proportions* of human Bodies by *monstrous* and *mis-shapen* Births, so neither ought we to judge of what is *natural* or *unnatural* to Men by those *Brutes in human Shape*, who, by submitting their *Reason* to their *Passions* and *Appetites*, have *disfigured* their Natures, and *distorted* it into an unnatural Position; but if we would know what is *human* and *natural* to us, we must take our Measures from those who live most *conformably* to the *Laws* of a *rational Nature*; and these are they whom we call *Pious* and *Virtuous*, who are therefore to be look'd upon as the *true* Standards of *human* Nature, by whom we may best *judge* of what is *natural* and *unnatural* to us; and if we judge by *these*, we shall most certainly find that *Virtue*, and the *Hopes* of *Immortality* are so nearly allied, that like *Hippocrates*'s Twins they live and die together. For tho while Men live a *brutish* and *sensual* Life, their *future* Hopes are usually *drown'd* in their *present* Enjoyments; yet when once they recover out of this *unnatural* State, and begin to live like *reasonable* Beings, immediately they feel great *Desires* and *Expectations* of a future Happiness *springing up* in their Minds, and so *arising* higher and higher proportionably as they *advance* in Virtue and Goodness; which is a plain Evidence that these Hopes and Desires are *natural* to us, and *interwoven* with the *Frame* and *Constitution* of our Souls. But now how can it consist with the *Goodness* of God to *implant* such Desires and Hopes in our Natures, and then *withhold* from them that which is the only Object that can *suit* and *satisfy* them? For as a great Divine of our own hath well observ'd, *other* Beings, we see, have no *natural* Desire *in vain*, the good God having so ordered Things that there are *Objects* in Nature *apportioned* to all their natural *Appetites*; but if there be no *future* State of Happiness reserved for *good* Men, *we* are by a natural Principle most strongly *inclined* to that which we can never *attain* to; as if God had *purposely* framed us with such *Inclinations*, that so we might be perpetually *tormented* between those two Passions, *Desire* and *Despair*, an earnest *Propension* after a future Happiness, and an utter *Incapacity* of enjoying it; as if Nature itself, whereby all *other* Things are disposed to their *Perfection*, did serve only in *Man* to make him *miserable*, and, which is more considerable, as if *Virtue*, which is the *Perfection* of *Nature*, did only serve to contribute to our *Infelicity*, by raising in us such *Desires* and *Expectations* as without a future Happiness must be for ever *disappointed*. But if this *Desire* and *Expectation* be *natural* to us, as it evidently is, it must be implanted there by the *God of Nature*, with whose *Truth* and *Goodness* it can never *consist* to inspire us with such *Desires* and *Hopes*, as he knows have no *Object* in the *Nature of Things*, and so can never be *fulfilled* and *accomplished*.

V. From the excellent *Frame* and *Constitution* of human Nature, it's also evident that there is a future State of Reward and Punishment. For whoever shall impartially consider the *Frame* of our Natures, will easily discern that we are made for much *greater* Purposes than to enjoy *this* World, and that our Faculties are as much too big for these *sensitive* Fruitions as the Channel of the *Ocean* is for the Streams of a *little* River. For the *highest* Happiness we can frame an Idea of, is the *Enjoyment* of God by *Contemplation*, and *Love*, and *Imitation* of his Perfections, as I have prov'd at large, *Part* 1. *c.* 3. which doth as far excel all *worldly* Happiness, as the Enjoyments of a *Prince* do the Pleasures of a *Fly*; and yet it is evident that our Minds are fram'd with a natural *Capacity* of enjoying this *supreme* Beatitude, *i. e.* of *contemplating*, and *loving*, and *imitating* God. For as for the *Being* and *Existence* of God, all Things round about us *preach* and *proclaim* it, and which way soever we turn our Eyes, we behold the *Footsteps* of his *Power* and *Wisdom*; and being endow'd with a *reasoning* Faculty, we can easily *ascend* to the *infinite* Perfections of *his* Nature by those *borrow'd* Perfections we behold in his *Creatures*, which are so many lively *Comments* and *Paraphrases* upon him, and so far forth as they are Perfections, must necessarily *meet* and *concenter* in him; and then such is the Frame of our Natures, that from the *Contemplation* of the *Beauty* and *Perfection* of any Being, we naturally proceed to *admire* and

love it; so that unless our *Wills* be violently *prejudiced* against the *Perfections* of God, our *Contemplation* must necessarily kindle our *Love* of 'em; and then those Perfections which we *love* and *admire* in another we are *naturally* ambitious to *transcribe* into our selves; so that being once *inflamed* with the Love of God, *that* will be continually *prompting* us to *imitate* him, and *that* will by degrees *mould* us into a fair and glorious *Resemblance* of him. Thus God hath *implanted* in the very *Frame* of our Nature a most *forward* Capacity of *enjoying* himself, which in the *Perfection* of it infinitely *transcends* all that can be imagined in a *Terrestrial* Paradise. And yet tho we have Faculties that we are sure are *naturally* capable of enjoying him to *Perfection*, of contemplating him without *Weariness*, of *loving* him without *Aversion*, of *imitating* him without *Difficulty* or *Interruption*; in this *present* State of Things it is *morally* impossible we should ever *arise* to it. For our Faculties are *clogg'd* with so many *sinful* Prejudices, *interrupted* with so many *bodily* Necessities, *diverted* with so many *secular* Occasions, that it cannot be *reasonably* expected even from the *best* Men in the World, that they should in this Life *approach* the *Perfection* of the *Happiness* of *divine Enjoyment*; especially if there were no *other* Life but this; for then it would be *Folly* so much as to *attempt* it. For what Man in his *Wits* would ever think it worth the while to spend a *considerable* Part of his Life in *waging War* with himself, *mortifying* his Affections, *crossing* and *starving out* his dearest Inclinations, (which yet he *must* do ere he can arrive to any *comfortable* Degree of *divine Enjoyment*) if there were no *other* Recompence to be expected *at last*, but to live a few Days *longer* in a *rapturous Muse*, and then lie down in everlasting *Darkness* and *Insensibility*. Were he not a thousand Times better *please* and *gratify* himself at present, *content* his craving *Desires* with the Goods that are before him, and take his *fill* of those sensual *Delights* that readily *offer* themselves to his Enjoyment, than *run away* from them in a *long* and *wearisome* Quest of *Spiritual* Joys, which for all he knows he may never *arrive* to, or if he *doth*, is sure within a *few* Moments to be *deprived* of for ever? So that if there be no other State but *this*, it's plain we are made *naturally* capable of the *highest* Happiness to *no purpose*; we are naturally capable of *enjoying* God, and yet such are our Circumstances in *this* present State, that if there be no *other*, it is not to be *expected* we should ever *arrive* to any *high* Degree of Enjoyment; and if it *were*, all Things considered, 'twould be an egregious Piece of *Folly* to *attempt* it. Now how can it consist either with the divine *Wisdom* or *Goodness* to create in us such *vast* Capacities of *spiritual* Happiness, and then place us in *such* Circumstances wherein 'twould be both *imprudent* and in *vain* for us to pursue any *other* Happiness but what is *carnal* and *sensual*? No *wise* Man would build a House unless he meant it should be *inhabited*; and can we imagine that the *All-wise* God would ever have created in us such *vast* and *boundless* Capacities of Happiness, merely to *stand* empty, and be for ever *uninhabited*; and that he who always proposes to himself the most *noble* and *worthy* Ends of his Actions, would ever have form'd in us such *superfluous* Capacities, or built such *spacious* Rooms in our Nature when he never intended to make any *use* of them?

And then considering the *Goodness* as well as *Wisdom* of God, what *likelihood* is there that he should create such *ample* Capacities in our Nature, and furnish it with such *excellent* Faculties, for no other End but to enjoy the *trifling* Goods of *this* Life; that he who hath created Goods for all *other* Creatures that are every way *adequate* to their natural *Capacities*, should make *us* capable to *partake* of the Felicities of *Angels*, and then *stake us down* to the Pleasures of *Swine?* Especially considering that by making us *capable* of a higher Happiness, and *sensible* of our own *Capacity*, he hath almost *necessitated* us to *expect* and *desire* it; and what is *this*, if he doth not *intend* it for us, but to create in us an *Appetite* merely to *vex* and *tantalize* it; as if it were a *Recreation* to him to sit above in the Heavens, and behold the Work of his own Hands, spending itself in *weary* Strugglings towards him, and *vex'd* all the while

while it continues in Being, with an *impotent* Desire of that which it shall never *enjoy*, and which by giving it a *Capacity* to enjoy, he hath *encouraged* it to *desire* and *expect*.

VI. And lastly, From the *Testimony* of the *Christian Religion*, it is also evident that there is a Future State of Reward and Punishment; which in most *express* Terms, *assures* us of *another* Life beyond *this*, wherein we shall be for ever *happy* or *miserable*, according to what we have *done in the Flesh*: So that we have as *full* Evidence of the *Reality* of Future Rewards and Punishments, as we have of the *Truth* of Christianity, and as *full* Evidence of the Truth of Christianity, as all the *miraculous* Works of our Saviour can give, and as *full* Evidence of the *Truth* of *his* Miracles, as the most *credible* Testimony of *Eye-witnesses* can give, who not only *confirmed* their Testimony by *other* Miracles of *their own*, but at the last *sealed* it with their *Blood*, which is the highest *Security* that mortal Men can give of their *Fidelity*; but tho this Argument be of all others the most *convincing* and *satisfactory*, yet I shall insist no *farther* on it in this Place, because I shall have occasion to prosecute it *at large* in the Seventh Chapter.

SECT. III.

By what Means *this* Belief *of Divine Rewards and Punishments is to be* begotten *and* confirmed *in us.*

THO the *Evidences* of future Rewards and Punishments be such as are *sufficient* to convince any *reasonable* Mind, yet it is evident that in this *degenerate* State of our Natures there is a *strong* Repugnancy to the *lively* Belief of them, insomuch that the *bare* Proposal of Evidence is not sufficient *effectually* to persuade us; wherefore before we dismiss this Argument, it will be necessary to add, to what hath been said, such *Means* and *Directions*, as, together with the *Evidences*, are proper to *dispose* our Minds to the *effectual* Belief of the *future* State: And these I shall reduce to these four Particulars.

I. If we would *effectually* believe the *future* State of Rewards and Punishments, we must *fix* and *inure* our Minds to *serious* Thoughts and Considerations. For whilst our Minds are taken up with *Fancies* and *Levities*, with *wild* or *ludicrous* or *incoherent* Ideas, or entertained with the *Cares* or *Pleasures* of this Life, they will not be *at leisure* to turn their Thoughts towards *another* World. For to think *close* of another World, requires a very *serious* and *thoughtful* Mind; because the *other* World doth not press upon our *Senses* as *this* World doth, which, wheresoever we turn our selves, is *continually* thrusting its *Objects* into our Minds thro' our *Eyes* and *Ears*, and whispering to our *Thoughts* thro' the *Organs* of our *Senses*, which are the most *immediate Entries* and *Inlets* to our Mind. So that the other World, being *quite* out of sight, and this *always* in view, it is as difficult for us to keep the one *out* of our *Minds* as to let the other *in*. For before we can set our selves to think *closely* of the *other* World, we must *shut* our *Eyes* and *Ears* to the Objects of *this*; otherwise they will *obtrude* themselves upon us, and *draw away* our *Thoughts* and *Meditations*; we must *gather in* our *Thoughts* from the Objects of Sense that are round about us, *take leave* of this World, and *retire* into our own Minds, and *shut up* our *selves* within our *selves*, that none of these *sensitive Things* may *come at* us, and that we may be *wholly* at *leisure* to *entertain* our selves with the *invisible* Things of another World. And this we shall never be able to do so long as our Minds are *vain*, and *roving*, and *desultory*, and possess'd with *wild* Imaginations, or *restless* Cares, or *extravagant* Mirth and Jollities; for these Things will put our *Thoughts* upon so many *Vagaries*, and render them so *loose*, and *wild*, and *incoherent*, that they will never be able to *hang* long enough *together* to form any *serious* Conceptions. So that when we would *fix* them upon the other World, we shall scarce be able to *gather* them *in* from those outward *Objects* among which they are *squander'd*; or if we

we *do*, we shall never *keep* them long enough *together* to form any *serious* Apprehensions of it; but as soon as they have taken a *cursory* View of it, they will be *flying abroad* again, and *roving* into Vanity and Impertinence. So that while our Minds are *light* and *vain*, they cannot think *enough* of another World *seriously* to apprehend and believe it; the Rewards and Punishments of that *invisible State*, are Things too *serious* for our *wild* Thoughts to *dwell on*; and till our Minds are grown more *fix'd* and *steady*, till they are more *withdrawn* from sensitive Objects, and more *accustomed* to *retired Thinking*, they will be too *volatile* and *fugitive* seriously to *apprehend*, and heartily to *believe* a future State. If therefore we would attain to a *firm* Belief of it, we must endeavour to *reclaim* our *wild* Thoughts, by accustoming our selves to *serious Thinking*; and when by *sad* and *serious* Meditations we have rendered our Minds more *fix'd* and *retir'd*, we must,

II. Endeavour to *remove* those *vitious* Prejudices which *indispose* us to the *Belief* of future *Rewards* and *Punishments*. For while Men live in *Opposition* to God, and have therefore reason to apprehend his *Displeasure*, this will *strongly* prejudice our Minds against the *Belief* of a future State; because this Belief must necessarily *gall* and *disturb* us, and render our *vitious* Courses extremely *Troublesome* and *Uneasy*. For when a Man is *resolved* to lead an *ill* Course of Life, and at the same time *believes* it will conclude in eternal *Wretchedness*, his *Faith* will be a perpetual *Plague* to his Mind, like *Belteshazzar*'s *Mene Tekel*, it will *scare* and *alarm* him in his sinful *Carouses*, and *imbitter* the Gust of them with many a *sad* Thought and *dire* Reflection; and till he either shakes Hands with his *Creed*, or his *ill Resolution*, it will be impossible for him ever to be *quiet*. Whilst therefore he *resolves* to *continue* his ill Courses, it is his *Interest* to *believe* there is *no* other World but *this*; he is *obliged* to it in his *own defence*, and as he *hopes* to enjoy *himself*, and *sin* without *disturbance*; and then his Interest having *bribed* his *Affection*, his Affection will be sure so to *biass* his *Reason*, that it will be a difficult matter for him to *convince* and *persuade* himself. For if there be future *Rewards*, he knows he hath no *interest* in them; if future *Punishments*, he is conscious he must *feel* and *indure* them; and to *believe* that there are such *Goods* as he shall never be the *better* for, and such *Evils* as he shall be infinitely the *worse* for, must needs be *extremely* repugnant to his Inclinations. For that which Men would *not have*, they are *averse* to *believe*; and that which they are averse to believe they are not easily *convinced of*, because their *Aversion* will cast such a *Mist* before their Minds as that they will hardly be able to *discern* a fair *Probability* in a clear *Demonstration*. Wherefore if ever you would arrive at a *firm* Belief of the future Rewards and Punishments, you must endeavour to *dispel* from your Minds those *Prejudices* against it with which your own *ill* Courses are apt to *inspire* you, by resolving with your selves to *lay aside* your sinful *Affections* and *Interests* while you are *examining* the Evidences of another World, and not to suffer them to *intermingle* with your *Reasonings*; concluding that in a matter of such *infinite* Moment 'tis the greatest *Madness* in the World to *think* as you *wish* and *believe* as you *affect*; that 'tis not *your* Unbelief will either *extinguish* the Joys of *Heaven*, or *quench* the Flames of *Hell*, and that since the nature of things will not *bend* to *your* Wishes, and *be* as *you* would have them, it is your *true* Interest to *believe* that they are *what* they are, especially in a matter of such infinite Concern to you; that if Heaven and Hell are not *Dreams* but *Realities*, you will most certainly *find* them so whatever you *think* of them, and that therefore it concerns you, as much as an Eternity of Happiness or Misery *amounts* to, to *believe* that they are *real* if they *are* so, lest out of a vain *Confidence* that there are *no such* Things, you *forfeit* Heaven and *incur* Hell-fire. With such Thoughts as *these* you must often *encounter* those *Prejudices* which *Sin* raises in your Minds; and when once you have *conquer'd* them, and *reduced* your Minds to an *impartial* Desire of being *rightly informed* in this Matter, and in order to that, to give an *equal hearing* to the Reasons on both sides, you are fairly *prepared* for the *Belief* of another World, which cannot *fail* to obtain upon your Understandings, if

III. You

III. You *duly* examine those *Motives* of *Credibility* upon which those *future* Rewards and Punishments are *proposed*. For tho *Faith be the Gift of God*, yet it is a *Gift* which he *confers* upon us as he doth all his *other* Blessings, in the use of *due* and *proper* Means; and as it is *the Blessing of the Lord that makes Rich*, but not without the Concurrence of the *diligent Hand*, so 'tis the *Grace* of God that gives us *Faith*, but not without *our* Application to the *natural* Means. Now the natural Means of Faith is a due *Consideration* of the *Evidence* upon which the *Matter* to be *believed* is *founded* and *proposed*. For tho the Matter be never so evident in *itself*, yet it is not evident to *us* till we have duly *considered* it; and if we *believe* without *Evidence*, we believe with our *Wills*, and not with our *Understandings*; whereas in *Reality* believing is properly an Act of the *Understanding*, whereby it *assents* to a Thing as *true*, which it cannot do without some *Proof* and *Evidence* that it *is* so; and therefore when we assent to Things as true with our *Wills* without our *Understanings*, or, which is the same Thing, without *Proof* and *Evidence*, we cannot so properly be said to *believe*, as *not* to *disbelieve* them. For there are a World of Things which Men do neither *deny* nor *affirm*, *believe* nor *disbelieve*, that is, about which they never *concern* their Thoughts, nor *trouble* their Heads, one way or t'other. And thus it is here; there are many who *pretend* to *believe* another World, but if you ask them *why*, they can give no *Reason*, nor did they ever *inquire* whether there be *any* to be *given*; so that it is plain whatever they *imagine*, they do not *believe* it; for to *believe* without *Understanding*, is as perfect Nonsense, as to *understand* without *Evidence*, or *believe* without *Faith*. So that *that* which they call *Faith*, is only *not disbelieving*; whether there *be* another World or *no*, they never *troubled* their Heads to *inquire*, and so having no Evidence *pro* or *con*, their Understanding doth neither *affirm* nor *deny*, *believe* nor *disbelieve*, but negligently leaves the matter in *Suspense* and *Uncertainty*.

The natural *Means* of *Faith* therefore, you see, is a due *Inquiry* into the *Evidence* of the *Truth* and *Reality* of the Things we believe; and therefore if we would *indeed* believe that there is a future World of Rewards and Punishments, we must seriously *consider* the *Reasons* and *Evidences* that *prove* and *assert* it, and *urge* them *close* to our *Understandings*, till they have *forced* and *extorted* from them a *rational* and *well-grounded* Assent; which if we *do*, laying aside all *Partiality* and *Prejudice*, there is no doubt but they will be found *weighty* enough to *turn the Scale* against all *Objections* to the contrary; especially, if

IV. And lastly, You add to all these Means *fervent* and *hearty* Prayer. For Prayer in *itself* is a very *proper* and *useful* Means to *beget* and *confirm* in us the *Belief* of the other World, because it is an *Abstraction* of the Mind from those *sensitive* and *material* Objects which stand like Hills and Mountains *between* us and the invisible World, and *intercept* our *Prospect* of it. For whenever our Mind is engaged in a *serious* and *hearty* Prayer, it *dispels* all earthly Things before it, and *scatters* them out of sight, and having no *Mists* or *Clouds* in its way, nothing but a *fair* and *clear* Heaven above it, *thither* it directs its *Eyes*, and *Thoughts*, and *Desires*, without any *Lett* or *Interruption*. Now the very *withdrawing* our Minds from *sensible* Things to converse with *spiritual* and *invisible* ones, doth, as I shewed before, mightily *dispose* us to the Belief of another World. When therefore by *frequent* and *hearty* Prayer, our Minds have been accustomed to *retire* from the Objects of Sense, and to *fix* their *Thoughts* and *Contemplations* upon God, they will be able to turn themselves with more *Ease* and *Readiness* to the invisible Things of another World, which the more *familiar* they are to us, the better able we shall be to *apprehend* and *believe* them.

But then, by our *fervent* and *hearty* Prayers, we shall also obtain the *Assistance* of God, without the *Concurrence* of whose *Grace* we can do no *good Thing*, and much less *effectually* believe the *Rewards* and *Punishments* of another Life, which is the *Root* and *Principle* of all true Piety and Virtue. For to the forming a *firm* Belief of this Doctrine in our Minds, there is required a very *severe* and *impartial Consideration* of the *Proofs* and *Evidences* upon which it is *founded*;

ed; and considering how *vain* and *roving* our Thoughts are, how apt to *fly off* from any *serious* Argument, and especially from *this* of another *World*, which is so *offensive* to our *vitious Appetites* and *Affections*, what likelihood is there that we should ever *fix* our *Minds* to such a *thorow* Examination of the *Proofs* of another World, as is necessary to *beget* in us a *lively* Belief of it, unless God, who alone can *command* our Thoughts, *cooperates* with us, and *animates* our *faint* Endeavours with his *Grace* and *Assistance*; unless he by *suggesting* the *Evidences* of the *Future State* to us, and by *urging* and *repeating* them, *imprints* them on our Minds with all their *natural Force* and *Efficacy*; in a Word, unless by *following* our *flying* Thoughts with these his *holy* Inspirations, and *importuning* them *with*, and almost *forcing* them *upon* them, he at last prevails with them to *stay*, and *look back*, and *consider*, and *seriously* to ponder the *Weight* and *Force* of them, it is very improbable they should ever *abide* long enough upon our Minds to *settle* into a *firm* and *efficacious* Belief. Let us therefore earnestly implore the *Aid* and *Assistance* of God, and *beseech* him frequently to *inspire* our Minds with the *Arguments* of a future Life, and to *urge*, and *repeat*, and *set* them *home* upon our Thoughts, till by a *due* consideration of them we have *extracted* all their *Force* and *Evidence*, and *digested* it into a *lively* and *active* Belief; and if to the use of all the above-named *means* you do but add this of *Prayer* and *Supplication*, you may *depend* upon it, that he who hath *promised* to *open* unto all that *knock*, and to be *found* of all that *seek* him, will never *deny* you any *Grace* or *Assistance* that is necessary to produce in you this *fundamental* Principle of Religion, *viz.* an *effectual* Belief of the *Rewards* and *Punishments* of another World.

To conclude this Argument therefore, since *this* Belief is so *absolutely* necessary to *subject* our Minds to the *Obligations* of Religion, let us endeavour as much as in us lies, to *found* it in our *Reason*, by *convincing* our Minds of the *Truth* and *Force* of those *Evidences* upon which it is *proposed*. For while we *believe* upon *Trust*, and we know not *why*, our *Faith* must needs be very *weak* and *infirm*, and like a Tree without Root in the midst of a Storm, be unable to *outstand* any *Blast* of Temptation. For the Temptations of *Sin* are such *Goods* and *Evils* as are evident to our *Senses*, which do most *certainly* assure us that there are such Things in the World as *Pleasure* and *Profit*, *Reproach* and *Persecution*; and therefore unless when we are *tempted*, our *Faith* can confront the Evidence of *Sense* with the Evidence of *Reason*, and produce *good Proof* of those *future Goods* and *Evils* which it puts in the Balance against these present Temptations, it will hardly be able to *withstand* 'em. For what *likelihood* is there that the Things which we *believe* without *Proof* and *Evidence*, should have comparably that *Force* and *Influence* upon us, as the Things which we *know*, and *feel*, and *experience*? So that when we come to *oppose* a Heaven and a Hell, of whose *Reality* and *Existence* we have *no* Evidence, to *Pleasures* or *Profits*, *Reproaches* or *Persecutions*, which strike *immediately* on our *Senses*, it is easy to *prognosticate* which will be most *prevalent*.

But if our *Belief* of the future Rewards and Punishments be *founded* on such *Evidence* as satisfies our *Reason*, what Temptation in the World is there that can *prevail* against it; what *Good* is there that can *outbid* Heaven, or what *Evil* that can *vie* Terrors with Hell? For we see by Experience that the Objects of our *Faith*, when it is grounded upon *satisfactory* Evidence, do as *much influence* our Minds as the Objects of *Sense*; they who never saw the *Indies* unless it were in a *Map*, and so can only *believe* that there are such Countries, are yet as much *affected* with the rich Merchandizes they abound with, as those who have been *there*, and as ready to venture their *Estates* and *Persons* thither, thro' the *Danger* of the Sea, in hope of a *prosperous* Return. If therefore we believe that there is such a *State* as *Heaven*, with as *full* Satisfaction of Mind as we do that there is such a *Place* as the *Indies*, doubtless our *Faith* would affect us as much as our *Eyes*, and we should be as forward to go to *Heaven*, and venture thro' all *Dangers* and *Difficulties* thither, as if we had been there *already*, and had *seen* with our own Eyes all the *Glories* and

Delights it flows and abounds with. So that the Evidence of our *Faith*, if it be *clear* and *ſatisfactory*, will as much *affect* our Minds, as the Evidence of our *Senſe*; and *Heaven* and *Hell* will as *vigorouſly* influence our *Hope* and *Fear*, if with a *full* Satisfaction of Mind we *believe* them, as if we had ſeen and felt them. Conceive then that you had ſpent but *one Hour* in *Heaven*, *ſurveying* with your own Eyes the *Glories* of that *Place*, the *Triumphs* and *Exaltations* of its bleſſed *Inhabitants*, and the *rapturous* Joys and Delights wherewith it *entertains* them; conceive that after this you had been ſent for *another Hour* into *Hell*, and had there been *Spectators* of the *Horrors* and *Agonies* of the damned, of their *Torture*, and *Rage*, and *dire* Convulſions of *Soul*, cauſed by a *deſperate* and *remediless Miſery*; in a word, conceive that after *all*, you had been diſmiſs'd into this World again to *chooſe* your own Fate, and *determine* your ſelves to *that* happy, or *this* miſerable Portion for ever; think now what your *Mind* and *Reſolution* would be; whether you would not be willing to *loſe* any thing rather than *Heaven*, or to *endure* any thing rather than *Hell*; whether *any* Good or Evil *Sin* can *tempt* you withal, would be able to *out-tempt* the Rewards and Puniſhments of Eternity. Doubtleſs no, the *Remembrance* you would have of the *infinite* Joys and *intolerable* Miſeries you ſaw in that other World, would prove an *invincible* Antidote againſt *all* Temptation. Now what your *Senſe* of the other World would be if you had *ſeen* it, that will your *belief* of it be, when 'tis *founded* upon *clear* and *ſatisfactory Evidence*; 'twill be an *infallible Countercharm* againſt the moſt *bewitching* Temptations; 'twill render the *greateſt Goods* dreadful to us that *beckon* us to Hell, and the *greateſt Evils* deſirable that *drive* us towards Heaven. For *Faith*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *is the ſubſtance of Things hoped for, and the evidence of Things not ſeen*, Heb. 11. 1. that is, *it* renders its *inviſible* Objects as *real* and *evident* to us, as our *Senſe* doth *viſible* ones; and when Heaven and Hell are become as *evident* to our *Faith* as ſenſible Things are to our *Senſes*, what Good or Evil is there in all the *World* that can *out-tempt* them? For what *Good* is there ſo *good* as Heaven, or what *Evil* ſo *bad* as Hell? So that if our *belief* of the future Rewards and Puniſhments be but *founded* on ſuch *Evidence* as gives a *full* Satisfaction to our Minds, 'twill *draw* our Souls to God like an *invincible* Loadſtone, in deſpite of all the *Oppoſitions* of Temptations from *without*, and of all the *counter-ſtrivings* of a corrupt Nature from *within*; and there is nothing in the World will be able to *withſtand* it; no *Good* or *Evil* that Sin can *promiſe*, or *threaten*, that will have the Power to *reſiſt* its *Almighty* Perſuaſions, but 'twill *force* its own way thro' all *Oppoſitions*, and like an *overflowing* Torrent bear down all our *carnal* Conſiderations *before* it.

Wherefore, if ever we mean to *diſengage* our ſelves from the *Slavery* of Sin, and entirely to *devote* our ſelves to God and his Service, let us in the uſe of the above-named Means endeavour to *eſtabliſh* our Minds in a *firm* and *well-grounded* Belief of the other World; that ſo our *Faith* being built upon a *ſure* Foundation of *Reaſon*, may be able to *outſtand* all the *Waves* of Temptation, and to chaſe all thoſe Goods and Evils before it that *ſtand* in the *way* of our *Return* to God; and when by our *Faith* we have ſo far *overcome* the *World* as to *ſubmit* and *reſign* our ſelves to God in *deſpite* of all its Temptations, we ſhall find our *Belief* of the other World every Day, *grow* and *improve* upon our Hands, till at laſt it *commences* into a *certain* Aſſurance. For 'tis not ſo much Mens *Reaſon* as their *Luſts* that do *object* againſt the *Reality* of the future World; they are *loth* to believe it, becauſe it *diſturbs* them in their *ſinful* Enjoyments, and ſo their *Will* employs their *Reaſon* to *argue* againſt it; and when once their *Wills* are engaged in the *Controverſy*, a very *ſlender* Probability will weigh more on *that* ſide than a *clear* Demonſtration on the *other*. When therefore our Wills are *taken off* by a *free* Reſignation of 'em to God, all that ſinful *Prejudice* which renders us *now* ſo *averſe* to believe, will vaniſh from our Minds; and then we ſhall ſee Things as they *are*, and the *Arguments* of another World will appear to our Minds with ſuch a *convinciug* Evidence, as will quickly *diſpel* all our *Doubts* and *Uncertainties*, and render our *Faith* equivalent to a clear *Viſion*. So that we ſhall paſs thro' all the Temptations of the World with the ſame *Conſtancy* and *Reſolu-*

tion of Soul, as if we walked in *open view* of Heaven and Hell; and these *mighty* Objects which do so infinitely *transcend* all the Goods and Evils which Sin can *tempt* us withal, will have as *victorious* an Influence on our Lives, as if they were *present*, and did strike *immediately* on our Senses. And then, how is it possible that *any* Temptation whatsoever should be able to cope *with* or prevail *against* them? For he who is *fully* persuaded of the *Reality* of Heaven and Hell, must be utterly *abandoned* of all his *Reason*, if he sin for any *Goods* sake that is *less* than Heaven, or for any *Evils* sake that is *less* than Hell. When therefore we are *drawn* to God by such *invincible* Hopes and Fears as the *firm* Belief of the other World will *suggest* to us, how is it possible that any Temptation of Sin should either *dissuade* us from *coming* to him, or *persuade* us to *forsake* him? Wherefore it concerns us to take all *possible* care to *ground* our Faith *well*, and *improve* and *strengthen* it, that so in despite of all Temptations, it may *influence* our *Wills* and *govern* our *Practice*, and safely *conduct* us thro' all the *Snares* of this Life, and at length bring us *home* to everlasting Happiness.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Necessity of having right Apprehensions *of* God, *in order to our being* truly Religious.

IT is a noble and celebrated Passage of *Epictetus*, Chap. 38. τῆς περὶ τοὺς Θεοὺς εὐσεβείας, ἴσθι ὅτι τὸ κυριώτατον ἐκεῖνό ἐστιν, ὀρθὰς ὑπολήψεις περὶ αὐτῶν ἔχειν ὡς ὄντων καὶ διοικούντων τὰ ὅλα καλῶς καὶ δικαίως· i. e. *Know that the main Foundation of Piety is this, to have right Apprehensions of the Nature of God, and to be sensible that he is, and that he governs the World well and justly*; and accordingly, the *Psalmist*, speaking of God, tells us, *They that know thy Name will put their Trust in thee*, Psal. 9. 10. *i. e.* They who have made a true *Discovery* of thy *Nature*, and by *observing*, as I have done, the glorious *Effects* of thy *Wisdom* and *Power*, and *Justice*, and *Goodness*, have *formed* in their Minds *right* and *genuine* Apprehensions concerning *thee*, will make no scruple to place their whole *Trust* and *Confidence* in *thee*; which is *equally* true of all *other* Acts of Piety and Religion. For, the *true* Knowledge of God will as much *influence* our Minds to *love* and *adore* him, to *praise* him, and *submit* to him, as to put our *Trust* in him; and hence St. *Paul* ascribes all the *Impiety* and *Wickedness* of the *Gentiles* to their *not liking to retain God in their Knowledge*, i. e. to their wicked *Aversion*, to the *true* and *genuine* Notions of God, *Rom.* 1. 28.

In the *Prosecution* of this *Argument*, I shall endeavour these Three Things:

First, To shew in what *respects* right Apprehensions of God are *necessary* to our being *truly Religious*.

Secondly, To lay down some *Rules* for the *forming* of *right Apprehensions* of God in our Minds.

Thirdly, To *assign* and *remove* the common Causes of our *Misapprehensions* concerning him.

SECT. I.

In what Respects *right Apprehensions of God are* necessary *to our being* truly Religious.

IN general, whatsoever is *requisite* to render *Men truly religious* must be *derived* from *true* Apprehensions of *God*, who is the great *Object* of *Religion*. For *Religion* being the *Rule* of Divine Service, must *itself* be regulated by the Divine *Nature*, and without a *right* Understanding of the Nature of God, it

is impossible we should regulate our *Religion* by it. Now to the *right Conduct* and *due Regulation* of our *Religion,* it is requisite, first, that we should be *rightly* inform'd what *Services* are *pleasing* to God; Secondly, That we proceed upon a *true* Principle *in serving* him; Thirdly, That we *direct* our Services to a right *End*; Fourthly, That we be *furnished* with sufficient *Motives* to *engage* us to *serve* him; the *Want* of either of which will prove an *irreparable Flaw* in the very *Foundation* of our *Religion,* and render the whole not only *infirm,* but *defective* in its very *Constitution.* And in all these *respects, right Apprehensions* of God are *indispensably* necessary.

First, They are necessary to *inform* us what *Services* are *pleasing* to God.

Secondly, They are necessary to *inspire* us with the *true Principle* upon which we must serve him.

Thirdly, They are necessary to *direct* us to the *true End* for which we must serve him.

Fourthly, They are necessary to *furnish* us with *proper Motives* and *Encouragements* to *engage* us to serve him.

I. A *right Apprehension* of God is necessary to *instruct* us what *Services* are *pleasing* to God. For to be sure nothing can be *pleasing* to him but what is *agreeable* to the *Perfections* of his *Nature,* which are the *Originals* from whence the *eternal* Laws of Religion are *transcribed*; unless therefore we know what his *Perfections* are, how is it possible we should know what *Services* are *agreeable* to 'em? If you would serve a Prince *gratefully* and *acceptably,* you must inform your self beforehand what his *Nature* and *Disposition* is, that so you may *accommodate* yourself thereunto, and *compose* your *Actions* and *Behaviour* accordingly; that you may *furnish* him with *fresh Pleasures* if he be *soft* and *voluptuous,* or blow him up with *Flatteries,* if he be *proud* and *vain-glorious*; that if he be *covetous* and *tyrannical,* you may spunge and oppress his People, and *drain* their *Wealth* into his Coffers; if *just* and *beneficent,* you may *assist* and *forward* him in *righting* the *Injuries, correcting* the *Miscarriages,* and *alleviating* the *Burdens* of his Subjects. And thus if you would *serve* the great King of the World in such ways as are *pleasing* and *acceptable* to him, you must *study* his *Nature,* and endeavour to *inform* your selves which way his infinite Perfections do *incline* him, that so you may know how to *comport* your selves towards him, and to *render* him such Services as are agreeable to his Nature. For there is no Rule in the World but only that of his *Nature,* by which you can *certainly* conclude what will *please* him, and tho he hath told you by express *Revelation* what Services he *expects,* and what will *please* him, yet without recurring to the Rule of his *Nature,* you can never be *secure* either that what he told you is *true,* or that what he told you was pleasing to him *then,* is still pleasing to him *now.* For how can you be *secure,* either that he told you truly what Services were *pleasing* to him, but only from the *Truth* and *Veracity* of his Nature; or that the Services which were pleasing to him *then,* are pleasing to him *now,* but from the *Stability* and *Unchangeableness* of his Nature? So that in our *Inquiries* after what is pleasing to God, we cannot depend upon his *Word* without consulting his *Nature,* which is not only the *Security,* but also the *Test* of his Word. For it's certain that *that* cannot be God's *Word* which *contradicts* his *Nature*; and what *plausible* Pretence soever any Doctrine may make to *divine Revelation,* if it *teach* or *command* any Thing that is apparently *repugnant* to the *divine Perfections,* we ought for that Reason to conclude it an *Imposture*; it being much *more* possible that the most *plausible* Pretence to *Revelation* should be *false,* than that God should *reveal* any Doctrine that is *repugnant* to his *Nature.* So that in all our Inquiries what is *pleasing* to God, our *last Appeal* must be to his *Nature,* which is the great *Standard* of *Good* and *Evil,* by which we are to *measure* what is *pleasing* and *displeasing* to him.

Whilst therefore we are *ignorant* of God's Nature, or possessed with *wrong* and *false* Apprehensions of it, we must necessarily *wander* in the *dark*, and neither know *what* to *do*, or *how* to *behave* our selves towards him. For how can we *imagine* what will *please* or *displease* a *dark* and *unknown* Nature, whose *bent* and *inclinations* we are utterly *unacquainted* with; but if we are under *false* Apprehensions of his Nature, they must necessarily *mislead* us in our *Behaviour* towards him, and put us upon *false* Ways of *serving* and *pleasing* him. Thus, if we apprehend him to be a *froward* and *testy* Being, that is apt to be *pleased* and *displeased* with *Trifles*, in *conformity* to our Apprehension of his Nature, we shall offer him a *trifling* Service, a Service made up of *Pageantry* and *Compliment*, of *pompous* Shew and *ceremonious* Respects and *empty* Formalities; for such a *trifling* Worship is in itself most *proper* for such a *humorous* Divinity. So if we apprehend him to be of an *imperious* and *tyrannical* Nature, that governs *Himself* and the *World* by a *blind* and *obstinate* Will, without any regard to the *eternal Reasons* of Things, we shall worship him as the *Indians* do their *arbitrary* Devils, *i. e.* follow him with *Howlings* and *Lamentations*, with *trembling* Hearts and *frighted* Looks, and *dismal* Tones, and by *flattering* him with *Praises*, and *fawning* upon him with *slavish* Submissions and Addresses endeavour to *collogue* with Heaven, and *ingratiate* our selves with its *dreadful* Majesty; for what can be more *agreeable* to such a *tyrannical* Divinity than such a *forc'd* and *slavish* Worship? in a word, if we apprehend him to be a *fond* and *indulgent* Being, that is govern'd by a *foolish* Pity and *blind* Commiseration, we shall not fail to render him a *suitable* Worship, *i. e.* to *retire* and grow *melancholy*, to *whine* and *bemoan* our selves; to *deject* our Looks, and *disfigure* our Countenances, and *teaze* our Souls into fits of *fruitless* Compunction, that so by the *soft* Rhetorick of a a *well-acted* Sorrow, we may *pierce* his Bowels and *melt* him into *Pity* and *Compassion* towards us; for what can be more *prevalent* with such a *soft* and *indulgent* Deity, than such a *mournful* and *passionate* Religion? Thus, whilst we have *wrongful* Apprehensions of God, they must necessarily *mislead* us into *false* Ways of Worship, because we can no otherwise worship him than by *rendering* him *such* Services as are *suitable* to the Apprehensions we have of his *Nature*; and therefore, while we think any *otherwise* of his Nature than *it is*, we must necessarily think such Services *suitable* to it as *are not*.

But if we *truly* understand what God *is*, we cannot but apprehend what Worship is *suitable* to him, by that eternal *Congruity* and *Proportion* that there is between *Things* and *Things*; which is as obvious to Mens *Minds*, as Sounds and Colours to their *Ears* and *Eyes*. If God be a Being endow'd with *such* and *such* Perfections, every Man's Mind will tell him, that between such an *Object* and such *Actions* and *Affections*, there is a *natural* Congruity, and therefore *so* and *so* he ought to be *treated* and *address'd to*, with *such* and *such* Actions and Affections to be *served* and *worshipped*. So that if we apprehend God *truly* as he *is*, circled with all his natural *Glories* and *Perfections*, our *Apprehensions* will produce in us such *Affections*, and our Affections such *Deportment* and *Behaviour* towards him as are *suitable* to the Perfections of his Nature, and we shall worship him with *such* Services as will both *please* and *become* him, with *admiring* Thoughts, and *dutiful* Wills, and *godlike* Affections; with an *ingenuous* Fear, an *humble* Confidence, and an *obedient* Love; with *chearful* Praises, and *profound* Adorations, with *sober*, *wise* and *rational* Devotions; such as will *wing* and *employ* our *best* Affections and most *noble* Faculties; for 'tis such a *Worship* only that can *suit* such *Perfections*, and *please* such a *Nature* as God's.

II. A *right Apprehension* of God is also necessary to *inspire us* with the best *Principle* of serving him. For it's certain that there is no Principle in human Nature that will so *effectually* engage us to the *Service* of God, or render our *Service* so *acceptable* to him, as that of *Love*; which will tune *our* Wills into such an Harmony with *God*'s, that we shall no longer *choose* and *refuse* according to our particular *likings* and *dislikings*, but what is most *pleasing* or *displeasing* to *him* will be so to *us*; and *our* Wills being thus *united* and *subjected* to

to *his*, our Obedience will extend to *all* his Commands, and admit no other *Bounds* but his *Will* and *Pleasure*. Whereas if we do not obey him out of *love*, we ſhall endeavour to *contract* our Obedience into as *narrow* a compaſs as may be, becauſe we ſhall render it to him with a *grudging* Mind, and conſequently with a *narrow* and *ſtingy* Hand; for we ſhall ſerve him no farther than we are *driven* by *Fear*, and the *reſtleſs* Importunities of a *clamorous* Conſcience, and ſo conſequently fall *infinitely* ſhort of our Duty, and take up in a *partial* and *hypocritical* Obedience. For while we do not *love* him, it is impoſſible we ſhould *obey* him with a *ready Will*, which is the proper *Seat* of his *Empire*; and while we obey him with a *ſtubborn* and *rebellious* Will, we are only his *Slaves*, but the Devil's *Subjects*. Till therefore we do obey him, at leaſt in ſome meaſure, from a Principle of *Love*, it is impoſſible our Obedience ſhould be either *univerſal* or *ſincere*.

But to the *inſpiring* our *Souls* with this *Principle*, there is nothing more neceſſary than *right Apprehenſions* of God, who in himſelf is doubtleſs the moſt *amiable* of Beings, as having all thoſe Perfections in *infinite* Degrees that can beget or deſerve a rational Affection. So that we cannot think him to be any way *otherwiſe* than he *is*, without thinking him *leſs lovely*, and detracting more or leſs from the infinite *Beauty* of his Nature; for ſince he cannot be *more* lovely than he is *in himſelf*, every *falſe* Apprehenſion of him muſt needs repreſent him *leſs* lovely. But ſince of all his Perfections, that of his *Goodneſs* is the moſt *powerful* Motive and Engagement of *Love*, there is nothing more neceſſary to *kindle* our Love to him than *right Apprehenſions* thereof. For being *infinitely* good, as he is, in his own Nature, it is impoſſible we ſhould conceive him to be better than he is; and therefore every *falſe Notion* we entertain of his *Goodneſs* muſt neceſſarily detract from it, and ſo much as we detract from his *Goodneſs*, ſo much we detract from the *principal* Reaſon and Motive of our loving him. And therefore in order to the *engaging* of our *Love* to him, it concerns us above all Things not to *entertain* any *Opinion* of him that reflects a *Diſparagement* on his *Goodneſs*. For too many ſuch Opinions there are that have been *imbibed* among *Chriſtians* as the *fundamental* Principles of their *Orthodoxy*; namely, ſuch as theſe, that God's *Sovereign Will* is the ſole *Rule* of his *Actions*, and that he doth things not becauſe they are *juſt* and *reaſonable*, but that they are juſt and reaſonable becauſe he *doth* them; as if he were *merely* an *omnipotent*, *blind* Will that acts without *Reaſon*, and did run thro' the World like an *irreſiſtible Whirlwind*, hurrying all things before him without any Conſideration of *Right* or *Wrong*; that his Decrees of *governing* and *diſpoſing* his Creatures are wholly founded in his *abſolute* and *irreſiſtible* Will, that determines of the everlaſting Fate of Souls without any *Reaſon*, or *Foreſight*, or *Condition*; that by this his *unaccountable* Will he hath *impaled* the far *greater Part* of *them* within an *abſolute* Decree of *Reprobation*, for no other End but that *Nimrod-like* he might have Game enough to *ſport* and *breathe* his *Vengeance* for ever; and that having *nail'd* them to this woful Croſs by this his *dire* Decree, he bids them *ſave themſelves* and *come down*, as thoſe cruel Mockers did our Saviour, and becauſe they do not *obey*, *torments* and *cruciates* them for ever, tho he knows they are not *able* to do it *of themſelves*, and hath *purpoſed* never to *enable* them to do it. Which Opinions do repreſent God in ſuch a *formidable* Dreſs, circled with ſuch a *ſtern* and *ghaſtly* Majeſty, as is more apt to inſpire us with *Horror* than *Love*. For tho by *perſuading* our ſelves that we are of the *ſmall Number* of his *elected Favourites*, we may work our Minds into ſome Degree of *Love* to him; yet when we conſider how *ſeverely* he hath *treated* the reſt of our *Fellow-Creatures*, without any other *Reaſon* but his own *Will*, this will intermingle ſuch a *Grimneſs* with his Smiles, ſuch a *Terror* with thoſe Charms for which we love him, as muſt neceſſarily *damp* the Fervors of our *Love*, and ever and anon *freeze* it into *Horror* and *Aſtoniſhment*, and ſo *Fear* will be at leaſt the *predominant* Principle of our *Obedience*; and while it *is* ſo, our Religion muſt needs *languiſh* under great *Imperfections* and *Infirmities*. For while our *Fear* and *Dread* of God is the *governing Principle* of our Religion, we ſhall but do *Penance* in all our *Ad-*

dreſſes

dresses to him, and every Act of our *Obedience* will be a kind of *Martyrdom*, so that we shall never be able to entertain any *chearful* Converse or *friendly* Society with him, and yet serve him we *must*, for fear *our Neglect* of *him* should rouze his *Vengeance* against us; and between this *Necessity* of coming to him, and this *Fearfulness* of approaching him, what can there be begotten but a *forc'd* and *constrain'd* Devotion, which because we do not *love*, we would willingly *leave*, did not our *Dread* and *Horror* of him *drag us* to his Altars. And as we shall *serve* him with a *forced* Obedience, so we shall *obey* him with a sordid and niggardly *Affection*; and while we grudge him our Obedience, we shall be most backward to obey him in those Instances of *Duty* that are of greatest *Moment* and *most* pleasing to *him*, and *most* forward in those that are of least Concern, and most pleasing to our *selves*. Thus while our Minds are ridden with *sour* and *rigid* Apprehensions of God, *they* will inspire us with a *slavish* Dread of him, and *that* will *restrain* and *contract* our Obedience to him. Thus *Maximus Tyrius* excellently represents the Case: Ὁ μὲν εὐσεβὴς φίλος Θεῷ, ὁ δὲ δεισιδαίμων κόλαξ Θεοῦ, καὶ μακάριος ὁ εὐσεβὴς ὁ φίλος Θεοῦ, δυστυχὴς δὲ ὁ δεισιδαίμων· ὁ μὲν θαρρῶν τῇ ἀρετῇ πρόσεισι τοῖς Θεοῖς ἄνευ δέους· ὁ δὲ ταπεινὸς διὰ μοχθηρίαν, μετὰ πολλοῦ δέους, δύσελπις, καὶ δεδιὼς τοὺς Θεοὺς ὥσπερ τοὺς τυράννους. *i. e.* The truly religious Man is the Friend of God, but the superstitious is his Flatterer, and the former is happy, but the latter miserable; for the one being encouraged by his own Virtue, approaches God without any slavish Fear or Dread, but the other being debased with the Sense of his own Wickedness, approaches him with Trembling and Despair, dreading him as a cruel Tyrant, *Dissert.* 4.

If therefore we would render him a *chearful*, *free*, and *universal* Obedience, we must endeavour to represent him *fairly* to our own Minds, and to think of him as he *is*, and as he hath represented *himself* in the holy Scriptures, *i. e.* as a *bountiful* Benefactor to all his Creation, and an *universal* Lover of the Souls of Men; that would have *all Men to be saved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth*, and doth *heartily* and *readily* contribute to our *eternal Welfare*; that leaves no *Art* of Love, no *Method* of Kindness *unattempted* to *rescue* us from eternal *Perdition*, and when we have utterly *baffled* and *defeated* them all, doth most *unwillingly* abandon us to the *woful* Fate we have *chosen* and *prepared* for our selves; that in *punishing* even the most incorrigible *Sinners* doth not at all design to *wreak* and *gratify* his own Revenge, but to do good to the World, and warn others by their *Sufferings* not to imitate their Sins; and in a word, that *importunately invites* us back when we are gone *astray*, and upon our *Return* graciously *receives* us, and when he hath received us, is infinitely industrious to *prepare* us for Happiness, and when he hath prepared us, abundantly *rewards* us, and when he hath rewarded us, everlastingly *triumphs* in our Glory and Beatitude: These and such like Thoughts are truly *worthy* of God, *befitting* the infinite Goodness of his Nature, and as *such* do earnestly *recommend* him to our *Affections*, as the most *amiable* and endearing Object in the World; and when by such Recommendation they have captivated our Affections, and *kindled* our Hearts into an *unfeigned* Love of him, they have inspired us with such a vigorous *Principle* of *Action*, as will both animate and *enoble* our Religion, and render it truly *worthy* of God and ourselves; for then we shall serve him with a *free* and *dutiful* Will, a *liberal* Affection, and a *chearful* Heart, and consequently render him a *full*, and *generous*, and *willing* Obedience. For so holy *David* tells, *Psal.* 119. 32. *I will run the Way of thy Commandments when thou shalt enlarge my Heart*, *i. e.* when thou shalt *open* and *widen* my *Heart* with the *Love* of thee, (for so St. *Paul* expounds the Phrase, 2 *Cor.* 6. 11.) I shall most *readily* and *chearfully* obey thee.

III. A *right Apprehension* of God is also necessary to *direct* us to the *End* for which we are to *serve* him; without which it is impossible we should serve him *acceptably*. For as a *good* Intention doth not *justify* a *bad* Action, so neither doth a good *Action* a bad *Intention*; and unless *both* are good, *neither* are acceptable. If I do an Action that is *materially* good with respect to a *bad* End, I *unhallow* and *vitiate* it, and render it *formally* evil. If I fast for *Strife*, or give Alms for *Vain-glory*, or *pray* to give a Colour to my *Rapines*

and *Oppressions*; my very Devotion is a *Cheat*, my Mortification a *Lye*, and my Charity an *Imposture*. So that in order to our *serving* of God *acceptably*, it's necessary we should *direct* those *Services* we render him to their *right* and *proper* End; and what *that* is we cannot well understand unless we have a *right Apprehension* of his Nature: For to be sure God hath proposed *that* to us for the *End* of our Worship, which is most agreeable to his own Perfection; and therefore unless we have a *right Notion* of his Perfections, how can we rightly apprehend what *End* is most *agreeable* to them? As for instance, the right *End* of our *serving* him is, that we may *glorify* him for ever in an *everlasting Participation* of his *Perfection* and *Happiness*; and this we can be no otherwise *certain* of, than by a *true* Survey and Inspection of his *Nature*, which will instruct us, That being infinitely *perfect* as he is, he must be infinitely *happy* within himself, and so can design no *Self-end* without himself, and consequently that the *End* for which he requires our Service, is not any *Advantage* he expects to reap from it, or farther *Addition* to his own Happiness, he being from all Eternity *past* as *compleatly happy* as he can be to all *Eternity to come*; and therefore what *other* End can he be supposed to aim at than *our* Good and Happiness? It is true indeed, he designs to glorify *himself* in our Happiness, but how? Not to render himself *more* glorious by it than he is in *himself*, for that is impossible; but to *display* and *shew forth* his own essential *Glory* to all that are capable of *admiring* and *imitating* him, that thereby he might *invite* them to transcribe that *Goodness* of his into their Natures, of which his *Glory* is the *Shine* and *Lustre*, and thereby to *glorify themselves*; and what can more effectually display the *Glory* of a *Being*, who is infinitely *wise* and *powerful* and *good*, than to *contrive* and *effect* the Happiness of his *Creatures*, and especially of his *rational* Creatures, who of all others have the most *ample* Capacity of Happiness? Doubtless the *highest* Glory of an infinite *Power*, that is conducted by an infinite *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, is to *contrive* and *execute* the most effectual Methods of doing the *greatest* Good; and what *greater* Good can such a Power *effect*, than the *eternal* Happiness of *reasonable* Creatures? So that God's Glory and *our* Happiness are so *inseparably* conjoined, that we cannot aim right at *either*, but we must hit *both*: and whether we say that his *End* is his *own* Glory or *our* Happiness, it is the same thing; For his Glory *is* our Happiness; and our Happiness *is* his Glory; and when he hath *perfected* our Nature, and advanced it to the *highest* Happiness it is capable of, it will *shine back* upon him, even as all other glorious *Effects* do on their *Causes*, and *reflect* everlasting *Honour* on that infinite *Power* and *Wisdom* and *Goodness* from whence it was *derived*. Thus right Apprehensions of the Nature of God will *naturally* lead us to the great End which *he* proposes in all his Transactions with *us*, and thereby direct us what End *we* are to propose in our Transactions with *him*. For that which is God's *End* ought to be *ours*, and therefore since *his* End is *his own* Glory, or, which is the same thing, *our* everlasting Happiness, it ought to be *ours* also.

But now while we *misapprehend* the Nature of God, we shall be apt to set up *false* and *indirect* Ends of serving him; as for instance, while we look upon him as a selfish Being, that centers wholly in himself, and separates his Interest from the Interest of his Creatures, doing every thing merely for his *own Sake*, we shall think our selves obliged in all our Addresses to him to *set aside* our *own* Interest and Happiness, and to aim singly and separately at his Honour and Glory; and yet this is the great *Fundamental* of the whole Scheme of some Mens Divinity, *viz.* That God aims wholly at *himself*, and regards the Good of his Creatures no farther than it serves *his own* Interest; that he made this World out of mere Ostentation, to *boast* and *magnify* his own Power and Greatness; and gives *Laws* to his Creatures, and exacts their *Obedience* for no other Reason, but because 'tis for his *Honour* to be *served* and *worshipped*? that he created *Hell* only to shew the *Power* of his *Wrath*, and prepare an everlasting *Triumph* for his *Vengeance*; and erected *Heaven* for a *Theatre* to shew himself on, that so having filled it with a vast *Corona* of *Angelical* and *Saintly* Spectators, he might *display* the *Glory* of his *Majesty* before them, and thereby provoke them

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to *extol* and *praise* and *commend* him for ever. And while we *thus* conceive of God, how can we hope that he will ever be *pleased* with us unless *we* aim at the same End that *he* doth, *i. e.* unless laying aside all regard to *our selves*, and *our own* Happiness both *here* and *hereafter*, we entirely direct all our *Worship* and *Service* to *his* Glory and Interest; which being impossible for us to do, whilst we have so much *Self-love* and so much *Indigence* together, will either render our Religion wholly *unpracticable*, or perplex us with eternal Doubts of its *Truth* and *Sincerity*.

And supposing we *could* direct *all* our Religion to *this* end, this instead of rendering it more *acceptable* to God, would only render it more *unworthy* of him; for then we should serve him under the Notion of his *Benefactors* rather than of his *Pensioners*, with a Design to *enrich* him, rather than to be *enrich'd* by him: And what an *unbeseeming* Presumption is it for such *indigent* Creatures as we to entertain the least Thought of *contributing* to God, or making any *Addition* to his *infinite* Store? He is above all *Want*, being infinitely *satisfied* from the *inexhaustible* Fountain of *his own* Perfections; and for us to imagine that he *needs* our Services, and *requires* them to serve his own *Interest*, is to *blaspheme* his *All-sufficiency*, and suppose him a *poor* and *indigent* Being, that for Want of a *perfect* Satisfaction *within himself*, is forced to *roam* abroad and raise *Taxes* upon his Creatures to *enrich* and *supply* himself. For if we serve him for *any* End at all, it must be either to do *him* Good or *ourselves*; if it be to do him Good, we *reproach* and *dishonour* him, by supposing that he hath *need* of us and our Services, which can do him no *Good* unless he hath some need of them. So that whatsoever some *high-flown* Enthusiasts may pretend, that it is *sordid* and *mercenary* to serve God for *our own* Good, I am sure to serve him for *his* Good, is *profane* and *blasphemous*; and therefore, either we must serve him for *no* Good, or serve him for *our own*; and since he is so infinitely *sufficient* to himself, that nothing we can do can *benefit* and *advantage* him, to what better Purpose can we *worship* and *serve* him, than to *receive* Benefit and Advantage from him; which, instead of being *base* and *mercenary*, is a Purpose most *becoming* both *God* and *our selves*? For to serve him with an *Intent* not to *give* to, but to *receive* from him, is to acknowledge his *Fulness* and our own *Want*, his *All-sufficiency* and our own *Poverty*; whereas, by serving him to the *contrary* Purpose, we do in effect set up our selves *above* him, it being much *greater* to *give* than to *receive*; and to make that the *End* of our Worshipping God, which doth in effect suppose him to be our *Inferior*, is to make our selves *Gods* instead of *Votaries*. What the *true* End therefore of our *serving* God is, may be easily inferred from a *right Apprehension* of his Nature: For do but consider him as a Being that is *above* all Want, that is *infinitely* satisfied in his *own* Perfections, and an *unbounded* Ocean of Happiness to *himself*, and then what other End can you propose in *serving* him, but to *derive* Perfection and Happiness from him, in the *Accomplishment* of which *he* and *you* will be *glorified* together?

IV. And lastly, a *right Apprehension* of God is also necessary to furnish us with proper *Motives* and *Encouragements* to serve him. It is the Nature of all reasonable Beings to be *drawn forth* into Action by *Motives* and *Arguments*; and the *most powerful* Arguments to *move* us *God-ward*, are drawn from the *Nature* of God, from his *Majesty* and *Holiness*, his *Truth* and *Justice*, his *Mercy* and *Goodness*; none of which can have their *just* and *full* Influence upon us, unless we have a *right* and *genuine* Apprehension of them: The *Consideration* of his *Majesty* is naturally apt to *strike* our Minds into an *awful* Reverence of his *Authority*; but if we *look upon* it under the *Notion* of a mere *arbitrary* Greatness, that governs not itself by *Counsel* and *Reason*, but by a *blind*, and *absolute*, and *unaccountable* Will, that always chooses and refuses *pro Imperio*, without any Regard to the eternal *Reasons* of Things, we may be *astonish'd* and *confounded* at it, but we can never truly reverence it. The *Consideration* of his *Holiness* is naturally apt to *deter* us from approaching him with *vitious* and *impure* Affections; but if we place his *Holiness* in a mere *formal Affectation* of external *Decency*, *Respect*, and *Reverence*, and not in the *immutable* Conformity of his Will with the

the eternal Rules of *Righteousness*, it may move us to be very *ceremonious* and *respectful* to him, as to the *Place*, and *Garb*, and *Posture* of our Worship, but it will never prevail with us to cleanse and *rectify* our Hearts and Affections. Again, the *Consideration* of his *Justice* is naturally apt to *restrain* us from *affronting* his *Authority*, by perverse and wilful Violations of his *Laws*; but while we look upon it as a stern and implacable Attribute, which nothing will appease and satisfy but *Blood* and *Revenge*, it may overwhelm us with *Horror* and *Despair*, but 'twill never persuade us to *reform* and *amend*. Once more, the *Consideration* of his *Mercy* is naturally apt, when we are gone astray, to *invite* us to return, with the hopeful Prospect it gives us of *Pardon* and *Reconciliation*; but while we look upon it under the Notion of a *blind* Pity, or *effeminate* Easiness and Tenderness of *Nature*, that will admit of no *Severity*, how wholesom soever or necessary to the Ends of Government, instead of *moving* us to Repentance, it will *animate* us in our Rebellion. In fine, the Consideration of his *Goodness* is naturally apt to work upon our *Ingenuity*, and to draw us Godwards with the *Cords of a Man, and the Bonds of Love*; but while we mistake it for a blind *Partiality*, that chooses its Favourites without *Reason*, and *rewards* them without *Respect* to their Qualifications, instead of *captivating* our *Love*, 'twill *provoke* our *Disdain*, and *excite* in us a secret *Contempt* and *Aversation*.

Thus tho the *Nature* of *God* be in itself a most fruitful Topick of *Motives* and *Arguments* to engage us to *serve* and *obey* him, yet by the false Representations that are sometimes made of it, it may be *perverted* into an *Inducement* to Wickedness, and made a plausible Pretence to *encourage* and *justify* us in our Rebellions against him. Whilst we look upon God as he is in himself, shining with his own unstained and immaculate Glories, there is nothing more apt to *influence* all the *Springs of Motion* within us; to *inflame* our Love, *encourage* our Hope, and alarm our *Fear*, and by *these* to set the *Wheels* of our Obedience a going. For there is nothing in human Nature that is capable of being *moved* and *affected* by *Reason*, which hath not an answerable Reason in the Nature of God to *move* and *affect* it. And as in him there are all the *Reasons* that can *affect* us, so there is all the *Force* and *Efficacy* of those Reasons, every thing in him being *perfect* and *infinite*; in him there is an infinite *Beauty* to attract our *Love*, an infinite *Good* to inflame our *Desire*, an infinite *Kindness* to affect our *Ingenuity*, an infinite *Justice* armed with an infinite *Power* to awaken our *Fear*, an infinite *Mercy* to invite our *Hope*, and an infinite *Truth* to confirm and support it. So that 'tis beyond the Power of all human Imagination to *frame* or *fansy* an Object that is so every way *fitted* to *affect* human Nature, and *influence* all its Principles of Action, as God *in himself* is. Whilst therefore we apprehend him *truly*, and as he is in *himself*, the Consideration of him must needs be of *wonderful* Force to *oblige* us to *serve* and *obey* him; and there is not *one* of all those *glorious* Perfections in which his Nature is *arrayed*, but will suggest to us some *powerful* Persuasive to *Piety* and *Virtue*, and either by our *Fear* or our *Hope*, our *Love* or our *Gratitude*, incline our Hearts to keep his Commandments. So that if we are *ignorant* of his Perfections, or do entertain *false* Notions concerning them, we shall either *want* those Motives to Piety which they naturally *suggest*, or draw Arguments from them to *encourage* and *justify* us in our Rebellions against him. And thus you see, in all these Instances, how indispensably necessary *right Notions* of God are to engage us to *serve* and *obey him*.

SECT. II.

Rules *for the forming* right Apprehensions *of God.*

Dionysius the *Areopagite*, and from him all the *Schoolmen*, assign three ways by which we are to frame our Apprehensions of the Nature of God, viz. *Viam Causalitatis, viam Eminentiæ, & viam Remotionis, i. e.* the way of *Causality*, the way of *Eminency*, and the way of *Remotion.* The first consists in *arguing* from those Perfections which God hath *caused* and *produced* in his Creatures to the Perfections of his *Nature.* For whatsoever *degrees* of Perfection there are in the *Creature*, they must either be *uncreated*, which is a contradiction, or *flow* from the Creator as from the immense *Ocean* of all Perfection; but 'tis impossible they should flow *from* him, unless they were first *in* him. So that when we behold *such* and *such* Perfections in the Creature, we may from them most certainly *infer* that the same are *all* in God, who is the *Cause* and *Fountain* of them; and tho the Divine Nature abounds with *innumerable* Virtues and Perfections, yet 'tis impossible for us, by our own *natural* Light, to *discover* any other of them than those of which he himself hath *imprinted* some *Specimens* upon created Beings; these being the only *Scales* by which our Understanding can *ascend* to the *reach* and *view* of the divine Perfections. But because all *created* Perfections are not only *short* in their *degrees*, but also intermingled with *defects* in their very *kind* and *nature*; therefore in attributing them to *God* we ought carefully to abstract from them whatever is *defective*, whether it be in *kind* or *degree.* For God is the cause of *Perfection only*, but not of *Defect*; which, so far forth as it is *natural* to *created* Beings, hath *no cause* at all, but is merely a *Negation* or *Non-entity.* For every *created* thing was a *Negation* or *Non-entity* before ever it had a *positive* Being, and it had only *so much* of its *primitive* Negation *taken away* from it, as it had *positive* Being *conferred* on it; and therefore so far forth as it is, its *being* is to be attributed to that *sovereign Cause* that produced it; but so far forth as it *is not*, it's *not being* is to be attributed to that *Original Non-entity* out of which it was produced. For that which was *once* nothing, would *still* have been nothing, had it not been for the *cause* that gave *being* to it; and therefore that it is *so far* nothing still, i. e. *limited* and *defective*, is only to be attributed to its own *primitive* nothingness. As for instance, if I give a poor Man an hundred Pounds, that he is worth so *much* Money is wholly owing to *me*, but that he is not worth an hundred *more* is owing only to his own *Poverty*; and just so, that I have such and such *Perfections* of Being, is wholly owing to *God* who produced me out of nothing, but that I have such and such *Defects* of Being is only owing to that *Non-entity* out of which he produced me; and therefore since our *Perfections* are derived from *God*, but not our *Defects*, 'tis altogether as *unreasonable* to attribute the *latter* to him, as it is *reasonable* to attribute the *former.*

Now the *Defects* of created Perfections which we are to *remove* and *abstract* from God in our Conceptions of him, are of two Sorts: First of *the thing*: Secondly, of the *mode of the thing.* The defect of *the thing* is when the Thing *itself* is such as that it wholly excludes something much *better* and more perfect; thus *matter*, for instance, is defective in the thing, because it excludes *spiritual* and *immaterial* Substance, which is much more *excellent* than itself. The defect of the *mode of the thing*, is when the thing is so excellent in *itself*, as that it excluded nothing better, but yet is deficient in *Degrees* of Perfection. As for instance, *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, *Reason* and *Understanding*, are Things so excellent *in themselves*, as that they exclude nothing that is more excellent, but yet as residing in *created* Beings want a great many *possible Degrees* of Perfection. Now both these defects being *natural* are *uncaused*, and so cannot pro-

ceed from the Author of Nature, and not proceeding *from* him, they cannot be ſuppoſed to be *in* him, and therefore in our Conceptions *of* him ought not to be attributed *to* him. In reſpect therefore of theſe *twofold* defects in created Perfections, it is neceſſary we ſhould conceive of God in the Way of *Remotion* and Eminence, as well as of *Cauſality*; otherwiſe we ſhall *injuriouſly* attribute to him the *Defects* of his Creatures, of which he is *not* the *Cauſe*, as well as their *Perfections* of which he *is*. If therefore we would do God *Right*, in our *Thoughts* and *Conceptions* of him, we muſt in the firſt place *remove* from him all *defect in the thing*, *i. e.* all *matter* and *material* Perfections; becauſe they are *defective* in their very *kind* and *nature*, as excluding ſuch ſubſtance and perfections as are incomparably more *excellent* than themſelves; and this is to conceive of him in the way of *Remotion*, which conſiſts in *removing* all kind of *matter* and *material* affections from our *thoughts* and *apprehenſions* of God. And then in the ſecond place we muſt abſtract from him all defect *in the mode of the thing*, *i. e.* all the defect of *Degrees* in thoſe *ſpiritual* Perfections of the Creature which we attribute to him, and *raiſe* and *exalt* them in our own Minds to their utmoſt *height* and *eminence*; and this is to conceive of him in the way *of Eminency*; which conſiſts in aſcribing to God the *ſhort* and *limited* Perfections of his Creatures *abſtracted* from all *defect* and *limitation*. Theſe *three* ways therefore are all indiſpenſably *neceſſary* to lead us to a *true* diſcovery of the Nature of God; as will yet farther appear by the following *Rules* I ſhall lay down for the forming a *right* Notion and Apprehenſion of him.

Firſt, If we would think *aright* of God, we muſt attribute all *poſſible Perfection* to him.

Secondly, In *forming* our Notions of his Perfections we muſt take our *Riſe* from the Perfections we behold in his *Creatures*.

Thirdly, In *aſcribing* to him the Perfections of his Creatures, we muſt *abſtract* from them every thing that is *defective* and *imperfect*.

Fourthly, In *arguing* from the Perfections of the *Creature* to the Perfections of *God*, we muſt diſtinguiſh between the *State* and *Relations* of *God* and *Creature*.

Fifthly, Tho in arguing from the Perfections of the Creature to the Perfections of God we are not to ſubject him to the *Rules* of a *Creature*, yet we are always to ſuppoſe his *Will* and his *Power* to be in perfect *Subjection* to the *Perfections* of his *Nature*.

Sixthly, In conceiving of his Perfections, we muſt always ſuppoſe them to be exactly *harmonious*, and *conſiſtent* with each other.

I. To the forming of a *right Apprehenſion* of God, it is neceſſary that we aſcribe to him all *poſſible Perfection*. For he being the *firſt* and *ſupreme* Cauſe from whence all the *Perfections* of Being are *derived*, muſt neceſſarily include all Perfection *in himſelf*, and *be* all thoſe Perfections which he hath *communicated* to others; for how can he *give* that which he *hath not*? It is true indeed, *free* Cauſes may give *leſs* to their Effects than they have in themſelves, but it is impoſſible they ſhould give *more*; tho they may *withhold* from their Effects any *Perfection* or *degree* of Perfection which they *have*, they cannot *derive* to them any which they *have not*. Whoſoever therefore is a *Perfection* of Being, muſt neceſſarily be *eſſential* to that *ſupreme* Cauſe from whence all Being is *derived*; otherwiſe there would be *more* in his *Effects* than there is *in himſelf*, and conſequently more than he could *give* or be the *cauſe of*, which is a contradiction.

And as all thoſe Perfections that are in *created* Beings muſt neceſſarily *exiſt* in the Nature of God, ſo muſt all thoſe too that are *poſſible in themſelves*. For every Perfection that is poſſible in it ſelf muſt be *poſſible* to *him* who is the *Cauſe* of all things; but no Perfection can be *poſſible* to him that is not *actually* in him; for no *Cauſe* can produce that Perfection in *another* which it hath not in

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itſelf, and therefore if there be any Perfection that is not *in* him, 'tis impoſſible it ſhould ever be produced *by* him, and that which is impoſſible to *God* muſt be impoſſible in its *own Nature*, that which is not an Object of *omnipotent* Power is not an Object of *any* Power, and that which is not an Object of *any* Power, is in itſelf *impoſſible*. Since therefore every Perfection that is poſſible in *itſelf* muſt be poſſible to *God*, and ſince no Perfection that is not *in* him can be poſſible *to* him; it neceſſarily follows, that all the Perfections that are *poſſible* in themſelves are *actually* exiſting in the Nature of God.

II. In *forming* our Notions of *God*'s Perfections, we muſt take our *Riſe* from thoſe Perfections which we behold in his *Creatures*. For our underſtanding being too *ſhort-ſighted* to penetrate *immediately* into the *Subſtance* and *Eſſence* of things, hath no other way to *know* and *apprehend* them, but either by their *cauſes* or by their *effects*; but now God being the *firſt* and *ſupreme* Fountain of all Cauſes, cannot be known by his *Cauſe*, becauſe he hath *none*, and therefore is knowable only by his *Effects*, that is, by the *Works* of *his Creation* that lie before us, and are within the proſpect of our underſtandings; in the which all that is *excellent* and *good* is an illuſtrious *Comment* and *Paraphraſe* upon God.

Now the *Effects* of God are all reducible to theſe four generals, *Subſtance* or *Eſſence*, *Life*, *Senſe* and *Reaſon*; all which are in *Man*, who is the *Epitome* of the World, and a compleat *Model* of all the Works of God; and therefore not only all *theſe*, but all the proper *Excellencies* and *Perfections* of theſe, muſt be ſuppoſed to be in *God*, from whom they are *derived*.

The firſt Effect of God is *Subſtance*. Now the proper Perfections of Subſtance are *Amplitude* and *Fulneſs* of Being. By the *Amplitude* of Subſtance, I mean its *greatneſs* or *largeneſs* as to the *diffuſion* or *extent* of it, in oppoſition to *littleneſs*, or which is the ſame Thing, to being *defined* to, or *circumſcribed* within a *ſmall* and *inconſiderable* ſpace; by the *Fulneſs* of Subſtance, I mean its having *more* of Eſſence or Being, by which it is *more* removed from *not being*, in oppoſition to things that have but *little* being in them, that are of ſo *fleeting* and *tranſitory* a nature as that they are *next* to *nothing*. Wherefore in conceiving of God, we muſt aſcribe to him theſe Perfections of Subſtance, even to their *utmoſt poſſibility*, that is, we muſt conceive him to be a Being of *infinite Amplitude*, that is neither *defined* nor *circumſcribed* within any certain ſpace, but *coexiſts* with, and *penetrates* and *paſſes thro'* all things; and by thus conceiving of him we attribute to him *Immenſity*, which conſiſts in being *unconfined* by any Bounds of Space in the *out-ſpreading* of himſelf to all Places that we can *ſee* or *imagine*, and infinitely *beyond* them. And then in conceiving of him, we muſt alſo aſcribe to him *infinite Fulneſs* of Being, by which he is ſo *infinitely* removed from *not being*, as that he cannot *but* be; and by thus conceiving of him, we attribute to him *neceſſary Exiſtence*, which conſiſts in being out of all *poſſibility* of *not being*.

But then ſecondly, another of thoſe Works of God from which we are to take our Riſe in conceiving of his Perfections, is *Life*. For he is the *Cauſe* and *Fountain* of all that Life that is in the World, and therefore muſt not only have Life *in himſelf*, but the *utmoſt Perfection* of it alſo that is *poſſible*. Now the Perfections of Life are *Activity* and *Duration*; by *Activity* I mean a vigorous *Power* and *Ability* to act, in oppoſition to *Weakneſs* and *Impotence*, which muſt needs be a *great* Perfection of Life, which is the *Spring* and *Principle* of Action, by *Duration* I mean a *long* continuance of Life, in oppoſition to that which is *ſhort* and *momentary*; for the more *laſting* the Life is, the more *perfect* it is, and the *more* there is *of* it. Wherefore in conceiving of God we muſt aſcribe to him the *utmoſt* Perfection of *Life* that is *poſſible*, that is, we muſt conceive him to be *infiniely Active* and *Powerful*, and doth what he *pleaſes* in Heaven and on Earth, and can effect whatſoever is *poſſible* in *itſelf*, and not *repugnant* to the *other* Perfections of his Nature; and in thus conceiving of him, we attribute *Omnipotence* to him, which conſiſts in an *ability* to do *every thing* that doth not

imply

imply a Contradiction, either to the Nature of the *Things themselves*, or to the Nature and Perfections of the *Doer*; and then in conceiving of him we must also ascribe to him an *infinite Duration* of Life, that is, a Life that is not *bounded* either by a *Beginning* or an *End*, but is *from everlasting to everlasting*, and *coexists* and runs *parallel* with all Duration *past*, and *present*, and *to come*; and by thus conceiving of him we attribute *Eternity* to him, which consists in a *boundless* Duration of Life without any term of *Beginning* or *End*.

But then thirdly, Another of those Effects of God from which we are to take our Rise in conceiving of the Perfections of God, is *Sense*; by which I do not understand *carnal* or *material* Sense only, which consists in *perceiving* the *Strokes* and *Impressions* of *material* Objects on our Sensories, but Sense in the general, whether it be of *material* or *spiritual* Beings. For, that *spiritual* Beings have as *exquisite* a Sense of *spiritual* Objects as *corporal* of *corporeal* Ones, there is no Doubt to be made; because otherwise we must suppose them *insensible* both of *Pleasure* and *Pain*. Now the Perfection of Sense is *Quickness* and *Sagacity* of Perception, whether it be of *painful* or of *pleasant*, *grateful*, or *ungrateful* Objects; and this is to be found not only in *Beasts* and *Men*, but also in *separated* Spirits, in *Angels*, and in *God himself*. For tho none of these have any *corporeal* Sense to *feel* and *perceive* the Impressions of *corporeal* Objects, yet that both Angels and separated Spirits have a *spiritual* Sense of *spiritual* Impressions, by which they are subjected to *Pain* and *Pleasure*, cannot be denied; and tho God by the infinite Perfection of his Nature is exempt from all Sense of Pain, yet it cannot be supposed that he who is the *Fountain* from whence all Sense is *derived*, should himself be *insensible*; and if he be not, we ought to suppose him as sensible of all that is truly *pleasant* and *good*, as it is possible to be; and where there is an *infinite Good*, as there is in the Nature of God, it is possible to be *infinitely sensible* of it; and in thus conceiving we attribute to him *infinite Happiness*. For what else is an infinite *Sense of Good*, but infinite *Pleasure* and *Happiness*; and this is the Happiness of God, that he is infinitely *perfect* in himself, and infinitely *sensible* of his own Perfections, and therein infinitely *pleased* and *delighted*.

Fourthly, and lastly, Another of those Works of God from whence we are to take our Rise in conceiving of his Perfections, is *Reason*. For all that *Light* of Reason which shineth in *Human* and *Angelical* Minds being *rayed* forth, and *derived* from him, he must be supposed not only to have Reason *in himself*, but to have it in its utmost *possible Perfection*. Now the Perfection of Reason consists in *Knowledge* and *Wisdom* in the *Understanding*, and *Rectitude* or *Righteousness* in the *Will*. By *Knowledge* I mean considering and understanding things *absolutely* as they are in their *own Natures*, in their *Powers* and *Properties*, *Differences* and *Circumstances*. By *Wisdom* I understand a thorow Consideration of things as they are *related* to one another under the Notion of *Means* and *Ends*, and of their *Fitness* or *Unfitness* to the Ends and Purposes they are designed for. Wherefore in conceiving of God we must ascribe to him all *possible* Knowledge and Wisdom, that is, a *perfect* Comprehension of all things that either *are*, or *have been*, or *shall be*, or *can be*; in short, a Knowledge infinitely extensive, as comprehending all *knowable* Objects, and infinitely intensive, as seeing every single Object in all its *Relations*, *Dependencies*, and *Circumstances* with a most *perfect* and *infallible* View; and in thus conceiving of him we attribute to him *Omniscience* and *infinite Wisdom*. By *Rectitude* or *Righteousness* in the *Will*, which is the other Perfection of Reason, I mean a *Conformity* of the *Will*, and consequently of the *Affections* and *Actions*, to all that right Reason *dictates* and *prescribes*; for the proper *Office* of Reason is to *conduct* the Will, and to give *Bounds* and *Measures* to our Principles of Action; and in following right Reason, and *choosing* and *refusing* by its eternal *Prescriptions*, consists the *Rectitude* of the *Will*, and in that all *Moral Perfection*. In conceiving of God therefore we must attribute to him all those *moral Perfections*, which consist in the *entire* Compliance of his *Will* with the Dictates of his *infallible Reason*, in *choo-*

ſing every thing which right Reaſon *approves*, and *refuſing* every thing which it *diſallows*, and this with the moſt perfect *Freedom* and *Exactneſs*, and in thus *conceiving* of him we *attribute* to him infinite *Goodneſs*, infinite *Juſtice*, and infinite *Truth*. For as for the firſt, *viz.* infinite *Goodneſs*, which conſiſts in the *invariable Inclination* of his *Will* to do good *to*, and procure the Happineſs of his Creatures, by which he is infinitely removed from *Envy* and *Malice*, right Reaſon dictates to him, that being infinitely happy in *himſelf*, the *beſt* and *moſt becoming* thing he can do, is to *propagate* his own *Likeneſs* and *Reſemblance* by doing Good to, and procuring the Happineſs of *others*; and that *Envy* and *Malice*, which are the Properties of *poor* and *indigent* Beings, are infinitely *unbeſeeming* him who is a *ſelf-ſufficient* Nature; and accordingly his *Will*, which always follows his *Reaſon*, is infinitely *propenſe* to the *one*, and *averſe* to the *other*. And as for the ſecond, which is infinite *Juſtice*, which conſiſts in dealing with his Creatures according to their ſeveral *Deſerts*, by which he is infinitely removed from all *Partiality* and *Injuſtice*, right Reaſon dictates to him, that ſince there is an *immutable* Good and Evil in the Actions of *free* and *reaſonable* Agents, it is fit that thoſe who *do* Good ſhould *receive* Good from him, who is the ſupreme *Judge* and *Moderator*, and thoſe who *do* Evil, in *Proportion* to the Good and Evil of their Doings; and that to *reward* evil Actions, and to *puniſh* good ones, or to reward thoſe that are *leſs* good *beyond* thoſe that are *more*, or puniſh thoſe that are *more* evil *beneath* thoſe that are *leſs*, is to go *croſs* to the Natures and Reaſons of things; and by theſe Dictates of *Reaſon*, his *Will* is *invariably* regulated in all its Tranſactions with his Creatures. Laſtly, as for infinite *Truth*, which conſiſts in a perfect *Agreement* of his *Declarations* with his *Intentions*, eſpecially in Matters of *Promiſe*; whereby he is infinitely removed from all *Deceit* and *Falſhood*, right Reaſon dictates to him, that to ſpeak *Truth* is the only natural *End* of *ſpeaking*, that to *promiſe* is to *give* a *Right*, and to *intend* to perform *ſtrict Juſtice*; that on the contrary *Lying* perverts the Uſe of *Speech*, and betrays a *Baſeneſs* and *Meanneſs* of Spirit, that to *deceive* is to *injure*, and to *falſify* a Promiſe is to *commit* a Robbery; and accordingly his *Will*, which is ever guided by his *Reaſon*, *embraces* Truth, and *rejects* Falſhood with infinite *Abhorrence*.

And thus from the various *Perfections* of God's *Works* which are *before us*, we may fairly argue to all the Perfections of *God himſelf*. For whatſoever Perfection he hath *given*, he muſt *have*, and whatſoever Perfection he *hath*, he muſt have ſo far as it is *poſſible*; for if it be poſſible it muſt be within his *Power*, and if it be within his Power, to be ſure 'tis included in his *Nature*; otherwiſe he muſt chooſe to be *leſs* perfect when it is in his Power to be *more*. And by thus taking our Riſe to *God* from the Perfections of the *Creature*, we diſcover him to be an *immenſe ſelf-exiſting* Subſtance, that is *omnipotent*, *eternal*, infinitely *knowing* and *wiſe*, *juſt* and *good*, *faithful* and *happy*. But to render our Diſcovery yet more compleat.

III. It is neceſſary that, in aſcribing to him the Perfections of the Creature, we *abſtract* from them every thing that is *defective* and *imperfect*. For to be ſure there is nothing can be defective or imperfect in the *Cauſe* and *Author* of all Perfection. So that whereas all other Beings have ſome *Defect* or other intermingled with their *Perfections*, and do either *want* ſome *Kind* of Perfection, or ſome *Degree* of thoſe Kinds wherewith they are adorned, God hath all *Kinds* and all *Degrees* of all Kinds of Perfection; and ſo we muſt conceive of him, if we would *do* him *right* when we attribute to him the abovenamed Perfections. As for Inſtance, when we attribute to him the Perfections of *Subſtance* we muſt abſtract from them the Defect of *Corporeity* or *material* Extenſion, which compared with *Spirituality* is a mighty *Defect* and *Imperfection* of Subſtance, both as to its *Amplitude* and *Fulneſs* of Eſſence. For no *corporeal* Subſtance can be at the ſame *Time* in the ſame *Place* where *another* corporeal Subſtance is; becauſe it conſiſts of ſuch Parts as cannot *penetrate* each other: So that every *Body* muſt be *limited* in *Preſence*, becauſe it cannot be where *another*

other Body is; whereas a *Spirit* being penetrable *itself*, can penetrate or pass thro' all things, and consequently be present at the same *Time*, and in the same *Place*, where not only other *Bodies* are, but other *Spirits* too. So that by attributing *Body* or *Matter* to God, we must necessarily *confine* and *limit* the *Amplitude* of his Substance, which if it be *bodily* must necessarily be *excluded* from all those Places in which *other* bodily Substances are, and consequently have but a *finite* and *limited* Presence, which utterly destroys the infinite *Amplitude* or *Omnipresence* of his Substance.' And then *bodily* Substances being all compounded of *divisible* Parts, and consequently liable to be *divided* and *corrupted*, cannot have that *Fulness* of Being in them which *Spirits* have, which are *simple* and *uncompounded* Substances, and consequently void of all *Principles* of *Corruption*; so that by attributing *Body* or *Matter* to God, we *substract* from the infinite *Fulness* of his Being, and instead of ascribing to him *necessary Existence*, which puts him beyond all *Possibility* of *not Being*, degrade him into a *divisible* and *corruptible* Nature. Wherefore in attributing to God the Perfections of Substance, we must *abstract* from them all *Matter* and *material* Affections, and conceive of him as a most *pure* and *simple* Spirit.

Again, when we attribute to him the Perfections of *Life*, viz. *Power* or *Activity* and *Duration*, we must wholly *abstract* from them all those *Imperfections*, with which they are *commix'd* in the Creature. As for Instance, *Activity* in the *Creature* is attended with *Labour* and *Pains*; the not abstracting of which from the Activity of *God* made *Epicurus* suppose him to be a *restive* Being, that *withdrew* himself from Action, for Fear of *disturbing* his own *Happiness* by it; whereas *Labour* and *Pains* are the *Imperfections* of Activity, and so ought not to be admitted into our Conception of *God*'s, which being *infinite*, there is nothing can be *difficult* or *uneasy* to him: For it is because of *Imperfection* that *Labour* and *Trouble* do attend any Beings in their Operations; could they do what they do *perfectly*, it would be no Labour *at all* to them. God therefore having an *infinite Power* to effect what he pleases, whatsoever he *doth* he doth it most *perfectly*, and consequently without any *Toil* or *Labour*; and since all things were *derived* from him, and are *dependent* upon him, they must all be *perfectly* subject to his *Power*; and where there is perfect *Subjection* there can be no *Resistance*, and where there is no *Resistance* there can be no *Labour*. And then as for *Duration*, which is the other Perfection of Life, in the *Creature* it is attended with *Dependence*. For there is no Life but *depends* upon God, to be *shorten'd* or *prolonged* according to his Pleasure; the Lives of all Beings are *maintained* and *supplied* by his *all-enlivening* Power and Influence, which if he *withdraw* from them but one Moment, they presently *expire*; so that the Duration of all *created* Life is *dependent* and *precarious*; and even those Beings that shall live *for ever*, have no other *Tenure* of Life but God's *Will* and *Pleasure*, who with the *Breath* of his Nostrils can *blow* them *out* when he pleases. But the *Duration* of *God's* Life is altogether *independent*; for he subsists of *himself*, from that infinite *Fulness* of Being that is in him, and hath done so from all Eternity *past*, when there was no other Cause but himself in Being, and therefore *can* do so to all Eternity *to come* without the Support or *Assistance* of any other Cause. So that he is not at all beholden for his Duration to the *Good-will* and *Pleasure* of any other Being, but derives it from an inexhaustible *Spring* of Life within *himself*, whence he also derives Life to all other Beings.

Again when we attribute to him the Perfection of *Sense*, viz. *Quickness* and *Exquisiteness* of Perception, we must wholly abstract from it all that *Imperfection* with which it is attended in the Creatures; for in them it is attended with sundry *Affections* which argue *Imperfection* in their *Nature* and *Happiness*; such as *Fear*, *Sorrow*, *Repentance*, *Desperation*, and the like; all which argue a Defect of *Power* or *Wisdom*, and proceed from a quick Sense of Evil, *past*, or *present*, or *to come*, which is inconsistent with perfect Happiness. When therefore we attribute to God this Perfection of *Sense*, we must abstract from it all those Affections which proceed from the *Sense* of *Evil* or *Pain*. For he is

so infinitely perfect both in *Nature* and *Happiness*, that no *Evil* can approach him to *vex* or *disturb* him, or make any *painful* Impressions on his *Nature*; and being so, it is impossible that in propriety of Speech he should either *fear*, or *grieve*, or *repent*, or *despair*. All those Affections indeed are in Scripture attributed to him, but then it is in an *improper* and *metaphorical* Sense; not as if he did at any time *feel* these Passions within *himself*, but because he *demeans* himself towards *us* as if he *did*; not as if the Affections themselves had any Place in his *Nature*, but because the natural *Effects* of them appear in his *Actions* and *Behaviour*. And tho there is no doubt but he *resents* all those Evils which good Men *suffer*, and bad Men *commit*, yet it is not from any *painful* Impression that they make upon his Nature; for he neither *feels* the *Miseries* he *pities* and *relieves*, nor is *vex'd* at the *Sins* he *detests* and *abhors*, but all the *Resentment* he hath both of the Evil of our *Sufferings* and *Sins*, is perfectly *calm* to himself, and devoid of all *Passion* and *Disturbance*. 'Tis true, his *Will* being *perfectly reasonable*, must be differently affected towards *different* Objects, and *contrarily* affected towards *contrary* Objects, because they propose to it different and contrary Reasons; and therefore as it must be affected with *Complacency* towards *good* Objects, so it must be affected with *Abhorrence* towards *bad*; but this Abhorrence arises not either from any *Sense* of Hurt they *do* him, or *Fear* of Hurt they *can do* him, his Nature being wholly *impassible*, but from the *Repugnancy* they bear to his own *infallible Reason*, and his Abhorrence being wholly founded in his *Reason*, and not in any *Sense* or *Feeling* he hath of the Evils he detests, must upon this Account be stripp'd of all *Grief* and *Vexation*. Wherefore in attributing to *God* the Perfection of *Sense*, we must take care to *abstract* from it all those *Affections* which spring out of the *Imperfection* either of our *Nature* or our *Happiness*.

But then in the last Place, when we attribute to him the Perfections of *Reason*, (*viz.*) *Knowledge* and *Rectitude of Will*, we must also abstract from them all those *Imperfections* with which they are attended in the *Creatures*: as for Instance, *Knowledge* in the *Creature* is attended with *reasoning* and *discoursing*, that is, *inferring* one thing from another, arguing *Consequents* from *Principles*, and *Effects* from *Causes*, which is a great *Imperfection* of Knowledge, and a plain Indication that it is *narrow* and *confined* in itself, and not to be improved without *Labour* and *Study*. For that we are fain to infer one thing out of another, is an evident Token that we know but *in part*, because in this Way our Knowledge must be *successive*, and we must know one thing *before* we can know another; we must know the *Principles* before we can know the *Consequents*, and the *Causes* before the *Effects*; else how can we *deduce* the one from the other? And this *deducing* or *inferring* requires a great deal of *Study* and *Labour*. Wherefore in attributing *Knowledge* to *God*, we must abstract from it this *Imperfection* of *Reasoning* and *Discourse*; for his *Knowledge* being *infinite*, or *unconfined* by the utmost *Extension* and *Duration* of things, doth at one *Intuition*, or *simple View*, behold all things, *past*, and *present*, and *to come*; yea, *whensoever*, *wheresoever*, or *howsoever* possible: And beholding as he doth all *Consequents* in their *Principles*, all *Effects* in their *Causes*, he doth not know one thing *after* another, but comprehends them *all together* in his infinite Mind, without any *Succession* or *Improvement*. So that from all Eternity *past* he knew as much as he doth *now*, and as much as he *will* do to all Eternity *to come*; for his Knowledge was always *infinite*, and what is infinite admits not either of *more* or *less*: And then for that other Perfection of Reason which consists in *Rectitude of Will*, in the Creature it is *acquir'd*, even as that Knowledge and Wisdom is by which it is *measured* and *regulated*. For Rectitude of *Will* consisting in *choosing* and *refusing* as right Reason *directs*, must needs be *acquir'd* in the Creature, because that *Right Reason* is so, by which it chooses and refuses; so that there is the same Defect and Imperfection in the Rectitude of *our* Wills

as there is in *our* Reason and Knowledge, that is, it is not altogether, but acquired by *degrees*, and so it may be is infinitely *successive* and *improveable*. Wherefore in attributing to God *Rectitude* of *Will*, which, as I shew'd before, consists in *Goodness*, and *Justice*, and *Truth*, we are wholly to abstract from it this Imperfection of being acquired. For it is *essential* to his Will to *follow* the Dictates of his Understanding and Reason, and *essential* to his Understanding to *dictate* to his Will all the *Parts* and *Degrees* of Goodness, Justice and Truth; so that the Rectitude of his Will is *infinite* both as to the *Extent* and *Degrees* of it, there being no *Good*, no *Degree* of Good that an infinite Reason can *propose*, but what his Will doth most readily *embrace*, and perfectly *comply* with; so that the Rectitude of his Will is such as could not be acquired Part *after* Part, Degree *after* Degree, because it is *essentially infinite*; and *from* everlasting he was as *good*, and as *just*, and as *faithful* as *now*, and *to* everlasting he cannot be better, or juster, or faithfuller than he *is*, because what is essentially *infinite* admits no *Improvement* either of *Parts* or *Degrees*. And thus you see, how in all these Respects it is absolutely necessary to the Framing a right Apprehension of God, that in ascribing to him the *Perfections* of the *Creature*, we abstract all those *Defects* and *Imperfections*, with which they are intermixed.

IV. It is necessary that in *arguing* from the *Perfections* of the *Creature* to the *Perfections* of *God*, we distinguish between the *State* and *Relations* of *God* and *Creature*. For there are many things which are Perfections in the *Creature*, considering *their* State, which would be Imperfections in God, considering *his*, and so on the contrary. As for Instance, to be *dependent* and *humble*, *resigned* and *submissive*; to be *grateful* and *devout*, are *Perfections* in the *Creature*, because there is a Being infinitely *above* them in all *degrees* of all *Sorts* of *Perfection*, in *Knowledge* and *Wisdom*, in *Power* and *Goodness*, in *Justice* and *Truth*; a Being to whom they owe *themselves*, and all the *good things* they possess, and upon whom they depend for all that they *are*, or *enjoy*, or *hope* for; and therefore it infinitely becomes them to *abase* themselves before him, to *trust* to, and *depend* on him, and *resign* themselves to him; to *supplicate* him for all they *want*, and thank him for all they *enjoy*; but for God to be *humble*, who is infinitely perfect *above* all, for God to *depend*, who is the *Upholder* of all, for him to *submit*, who is *Lord* over all, or to be *devout* and *grateful*, who is the supreme *Fountain* and *Proprietor* of all, would be to *sneak* and *condescend* far beneath the infinite Dignity of his Nature. As on the contrary, to love *himself* above all, to set up his *Will* above all *other Wills*, and to *expect* and *require* that they should do *homage* to it; to exact *Adoration* and *Worship* from all, and to *appropriate* it to himself *from* all other Beings, are Excellencies and Perfections in *God*, because he is infinitely *amiable*, above all other *Beings*, and therefore ought in Reason to *love* himself above all, infinitely *exalted* above all other *Beings*, and therefore ought in Reason to expect that all other *Beings* should be *subject* to him: In a word, because *he*, and he *alone* is God, and hath all divine *Perfections* appropriate to himself, and therefore ought in Reason to expect that all *capable Beings* should *acknowledge* his Divinity by *suitable* Actions, and *restrain* their Acknowledgment of it wholly to *himself*; but for a *Creature* that is infinitely *less* lovely than God, and infinitely inferior to him, to *love* itself, and *set up* its own Will above him, and *invade* his Throne and Divinity, and *arrogate* to itself his Honour and Worship, is not only *unreasonable*, but *impious*. In this Case therefore we must carefully *distinguish* between the *States* of *God* and *Creature*, and not attribute to him those Perfections of the *Creature* which are proper to *it* under the Notion of *Creature*, because in so doing we shall infinitely *degrade* him; but whatsoever is in *itself* a Perfection, *precisely* considered from all *Respects* to the *State* and *Relations* of a Creature, that we ought to ascribe to God in its utmost *Extent* and *Degree*.

And yet even here it will in *many Cases* be necessary for us to keep this *Distinction* of *God* and *Creature* in our *Minds*: For tho whatsoever is *absolutely* and in *itself* a Perfection in the Creature, is also a Perfection in God; yet considering the *State* of *God*, that may be an Exercise of *absolute* Perfection in *him*, which would be Imperfection in a *Creature*. As for Instance, *Wisdom* and *Goodness* and *Justice* are absolute *Perfections* in a Creature, and therefore ought to be attributed to God; but it doth not thence follow that *that* is no Exercise of these *Perfections* in God which is not so in *Creatures*. It is an Act of *Wisdom* in a *Creature* to pursue his Ends by the most *probable* Means, but it doth not therefore follow, that it is an Act of *Folly* in *God* to effect his *Ends* by *contrary* Means, because he being not only *all-wise*, but *all-powerful*, which no Creature is, can make the most *contrary* Means as *subservient* to his Ends as the most *probable*; and therefore sometimes to *display* the Greatness of his *Power*, and to *excite* our *Attention* and *Reverence*, he chooses to operate by *contrary Means*, and when he doth so, he chooseth most *wisely*. Again, it is an Act of *Goodness* in *us* to *succour* the unfortunate, and rescue oppressed Innocence from *undeserved* Calamities: And not to do so, when we can with *Ease* and without any *Prejudice* to our selves, is a high Degree of *Malice* and *Ill-Nature*: But it doth not therefore follow, that it is an Act of *Malice* in *God* to permit Innocence to *suffer*, when, with *Ease* and without the least *Damage* to himself, he can relieve it, because being infinitely *wise* and *powerful*, which no Creature is, he can infallibly bring *good* out of *evil*, and advance us to *Happiness* by *suffering*; and therefore sometimes he permits the Innocent to suffer *Evil*, thereby to procure them some *great* and *lasting* Good; and when he doth so, it is an Act of great *Goodness* in him. Once more, it is *Justice* in the *Creature* not to *kill* or *hurt* the *Innocent*, not to *deprive* them of any *good* they are *rightfully* possess'd of; and to act contrary is great *Injustice*, because we have no Right to *another* Man's *Life*, or *Limbs*, or *Goods*, unless he *forfeits* them to us by some *unjust* Attempt to deprive us of ours: but it doth not therefore follow, that it would be *unjust* in *God* to do so, who being the supreme *Proprietor* of our *Lives*, and *Limbs*, and *Goods*, which no Creature is of any other Creature's, can *justly resume* them when he pleases, be he never so *innocent*, because they are his *own*: Whatever he *gave* us, he can *take away* from us, without any *Injury*, because he rather *lent* it than *gave* it us, reserving the *absolute Propriety* in himself; and his Right being *supreme*, *absolute*, and *independent*, and ours but *subordinate* and *conditional*, whatsoever *we* can justly do *he* can justly do, and abundantly *more*: So that tho we may argue this or that is *just* in the Creature, therefore it is *just* in God; yet we cannot argue *e contra*, this or that is just in God, therefore it is just in the *Creature*, because *his* Right in *all* things is *infinitely paramount* to *our* Right in *any* thing: And therefore tho he cannot without our own *Fault* and *Forfeiture* reduce us to a *worse State* than that of *not being*, wherein he *found* us, because to do so would be equivalent to the *taking away* from us more than he *gave us*, and consequently more than he hath a *Right* to, yet God's Right being infinitely more *absolute* and *extensive* than ours, he can *justly* take away from *us* infinitely more than we can *justly* take away from *one another*. And therefore to correct the Iniquities of wicked *Nations* and *Parents*, God sometimes lays his Hand upon *good* Kings and innocent *Children*, and either deprives them of their *Comforts*, and pursues them with constant *Infelicities*, or puts an untimely Period to their *Lives*; and when he doth so, he hath an *absolute Right* to do it, which no *other* Being can pretend to. Wherefore in attributing to God the *Perfections* of the Creature, we are carefully to distinguish between the *State* of *God* and *Creatures*, and neither to ascribe to him any of those *Perfections* which belong to a Creature, as a Creature, nor to bound the *Exercise* of those absolute Perfections we ascribe to him, by the *Rules* and *Limitations* of the Creature.

V. Altho

V. Altho in *arguing* from the *Perfections* of the *Creature* to the *Perfections* of *God*, we are not to *subject* him to the *Rules* of a *Creature*, yet we ought always to suppose his *Will* and *Power* to be intirely *subject* to the *Moral Perfections* of his own Nature. For God who is infinitely exalted *above* all other Beings can be *subject* to no other Law, but that of his own essential *Wisdom* and *Justice* and *Goodness*; and since every thing hath a *Right* to exercise its own *Faculties*, so far forth as it is *just* and *lawful*, God who is subject to no other Law but only that of his own Perfections, hath an *essential* Right to *will* and *do* whatever *that* Law *allows* and *approves* of. Now the *Perfections* of God, which give *Law* to his *Will* and *Power*, are those which, for distinction-sake, we call *Moral*, because their Office is the same in *him* with that of *moral Virtues* in the *Creature*, *viz.* to *conduct* and *regulate* his Will and Powers of *Action*; and these *moral* Perfections are his *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, *Justice* and *Truth*, which being all *essential* to him, are as much a Law to *his Will* and *Power*, as *moral Laws* are to *ours*: And to suppose his *Will* and *Power* not to be perfectly *subject* to them, is to suppose him a very *defective* and *imperfect* Being, a *lawless* Will and Power being the *greatest Defect* in Nature. Wherefore to *secure* our *Minds* against all *injurious* Apprehensions of *God*, *this* is a most necessary *Rule*, that we conceive him to be such a Being as can neither *will* nor *act* any thing but what his own essential *Wisdom*, and *Goodness*, and *Justice* do *approve*; that in all his *Decrees*, *Purposes*, *Choices*, and *Actions* consults his *moral Perfections*, and perfectly *regulates* himself by them, and doth neither *choose*, nor *refuse*, *elect* nor *reprobate*, *save* nor *damn*, without their full *Consent* and *Approbation*. For to affirm that he is not obliged to *regulate* himself by *Wisdom*, and *Justice*, and *Goodness*, or that he *can* do otherwise, is to attribute to him a Power to will and act *foolishly*, *maliciously*, and *unjustly*; which indeed is not so properly *Power* as *Impotence*; and to suppose that he can *thus* will and act, is to deny that he is *infinitely* wise, and just, and good, which utterly excludes all *Possibility* of being *otherwise* in any *Respect* or *Degree*. For to be *infinitely* wise and just, is to be *infinitely* removed from Folly and Injustice, which nothing *can be*, that hath the *least Degree* of *Possibility* to act *unwisely* or *unjustly*. Wherefore in conceiving of *God*, it is always to be supposed that his *Will* and *Power* are so *immutably* subject to the *moral* Perfections of his *Nature*, as that it is *impossible* for him to will or act against them. For all that *Liberty* of Will that is *determinable* to *Good* or *Evil*, *just* or *unjust*, is a *Flaw* or *Imperfection* in the reasonable Nature, because it speaks the Will to be *defective* in that which is the *utmost Possibility* of *Goodness* and *Justice*, *i. e.* in being *immutably* determined thereunto; and therefore to attribute *such* a Liberty to God, is to *scandalize* his Nature, and *reproach* it with Imperfection. For all that *Power* which is not conducted by *Justice* and *Goodness*, is only *Power* to *do mischief*, to *tyrannize* over other *Beings*, and to *sport* and *play* with their Miseries; which is so far from being a *Perfection* of *Power* that it proceeds from the most *wretched Weakness* and *Impotence*. So that by attributing *such* a *Power* to God, we foully *asperse* and *blaspheme* him, and *instead* of a *God* imagine a *worse* Devil, and *more* qualify'd to do Mischief than any that are now in *Hell*, who tho they are powerful *enough* to do Mischief, are none of them *omnipotently mischievous*; it is to imagine a *God* without a *Deity*, that is, without that *essential* Rectitude of Will, wherein all his *moral* Perfections do consist, which are the *Crown* and *Glory* of his Nature. For to be good and just are the *brightest* Rays of the Deity, the Rays that *illustrate* and *glorify* all his other *Perfections*, and without which infinite *Knowledge* and infinite *Power* would be nothing but infinite *Craft* and *Mischief*; so that to imagine that he hath any *Will* or *Power* that is not *essentially* subject to his *moral* Perfections, is to *deface* the very *Beauty* of his Nature, and represent him the most *horrid* thing in the *World*. Wherefore in conceiving of God we ought to fix *this* as the *main* and *fundamental* Rule of our *Thoughts*, that he hath no *Will* to *choose*, or *Power* to *act*, but what are in *perfect* Subjection to infinite

Wisdom, and *Justice*, and *Goodness*; and this will secure our Minds from all those rigid and sour Apprehensions of him, which by *reflecting* on his *moral* Perfections do him the greatest *Dishonour*, and represent him the most *disadvantageously* to Mankind.

VI. And lastly, it is also necessary that in conceiving of the Perfections of God, we always suppose them exactly *harmonious* and *consistent* with each other. For all Perfections of Being, so far forth as they are Perfections, are *consistent* with each other, and like *strait* Lines drawn from the same Centre run on together without *crossing* or *interfering*. For there is nothing *contrary* to *Perfection* but *Imperfection*, and there is no *Disagreement* but what arises from *Contrariety*. When therefore we conceive of the *Perfections* of God, we must so conceive of them, as that there may be no manner of *Inconsistency* or *Disagreement* between them, otherwise we must admit into our Conceptions of them something or other that is *defective* or *imperfect*. As for Instance, in God there is infinite *Wisdom* and infinite *Justice*, infinite *Goodness* and infinite *Mercy*; wherefore if we would conceive aright of these his glorious *Perfections*, we must take care not to admit any *Notion*, of any *one* of them that renders it repugnant to any *other*, but so to conceive of them *all together* as that they may mutually *accord* and *agree* with each other. For while we apprehend his *Goodness* to be such as that it will not *accord* with his *Wisdom*, we must either suppose his *Wisdom* to be *Craft*, or his *Goodness* to be *Folly*; and whilst we apprehend his *Mercy* to be such as that it will not *agree* with his *Justice* we must either suppose his *Justice* to be *Cruelty*, or his *Mercy* to be *blind Pity* and *Fondness*; and it is certain, that *that* Goodness cannot be a *Perfection* which *exceeds* the *Measures* of Wisdom, nor that Mercy neither which transgresses the *Bounds* of Justice, and so on the contrary. For if either God's Goodness *excludes* his Wisdom, or his Wisdom his Goodness; if either his Mercy *swallow* up his Justice, or his Justice his Mercy, there is an apparent *Repugnance* and *Contrariety* between them, and where there is a Contrariety there must be *Imperfection* in *one*, or *t'other*, or both.

Wherefore, if we would apprehend them *altogether*, as they *truly* are in God, that is, under the Notion of *Perfections*, we must so conceive of them as that in all respects they may be perfectly *consistent* and *harmonious*; as that his Wisdom may not *clash* with his Goodness, nor his Goodness with his Wisdom; as that his Mercy may not *justle* with his Justice, nor his Justice with his Mercy; that is, we must conceive him to be as *wise* as he can be with infinite Goodness, as *good* as he can be with infinite Wisdom, as *just* as he can be with infinite Mercy, and as *merciful* as he can be with infinite Justice, which is to be *wise*, and *good*, and *just*, and *merciful*, so far as it is a *Perfection* to be so. For to be *wise* beyond what is good, is *Craft*; to be *good* beyond what is wise, is *Dotage*; to be *just* beyond what is merciful, is *Rigor*; to be *merciful* beyond what is just, is *Easiness*; that is, they are all *Imperfection*, so far as they are *beyond* what is *perfect*. Wherefore we ought to be very careful not to represent these his *moral* Perfections as *running a-tilt* at one another, but to conceive of them *all together* as one *entire* Perfection, which, tho, like the Centre of a Circle, it hath many Lines drawn from it round about, and so is look'd upon sometimes as the Term of *this* Line, and sometimes of *that*, yet is but one *common* and *undivided Term* to them *all*; or, to speak more plainly, tho it exerts itself in *different* Ways and Actions, and operates *diversly* according to the Diversities of its *Objects*, and accordingly admits of divers *Names*, such as *Wisdom*, *Goodness*, *Justice*, and *Mercy*, yet is in itself one *simple* and *indivisible* Principle of *Action*, all whose Operations, how *diverse* soever, are such as perfectly *accord* with each other, whose Acts of Wisdom are all infinitely *good*, whose Acts of Goodness are all infinitely *wise*, whose Acts of Justice are infinitely *merciful*, and whose Acts of Mercy are infinitely *just*; so that in *this*, as well as in their *Extension* and *Degrees* they are all most *perfect*,

fect, *viz.* that they always operate with mutual *Consent*, and in perfect *Harmony*. And while we thus conceive of the divine Perfections, our Minds will be mightily *secured* against all those *false Apprehensions* of God which lead to *Superstition* and *Presumption*; for we shall so apprehend his *Wisdom* and *Justice* as not to be superstitiously *afraid*, and so apprehend his *Goodness* and *Mercy* as not to be presumptuously *secure*; and as on the one hand his Justice will protect his Mercy from being *abused* by our *wanton* Security, so on the other hand his Goodness will protect his Wisdom from being *misrepresented* by our *anxious* Suspicion. For while we consider his Mercy thus *tempered* with his Justice, and his Wisdom with his Goodness, we can neither expect Impunity from the *one* if we *continue* wicked, nor yet suspect any *ill Design* against us in the *other*, if we *return* from our *evil Ways*, and persevere in *well-doing*.

SECT. III.

Of the Causes *of our* Misapprehensions *of* GOD.

I Now proceed to the *last* thing I proposed, which was to *assign* and *remove* the *Causes* of Mens *Misapprehensions* of God; many of which are so *secret* and *obscure*, so *peculiar* to the *Frame* and *Temper* of Mens Brains, so *interwoven* with the infinite *Varieties* of human *Constitutions*, that it is very *difficult*, if not *impossible*, to *trace* them so as to make an *exact* Enumeration of them all; and therefore I shall only assign the most *common* and *visible Causes* by which the Generality of Men are *misled* in their *Apprehensions* of the divine Nature, which are reducible to these Six Heads:

First, *Ignorance* of what is the *true* Perfection of our *own* Nature.
Secondly, Framing our Notions of God according to the Model of our own *Humour* and *Temper*.
Thirdly, Obstinate *Partiality* to our own sinful *Lusts* and *Affections*.
Fourthly, Measuring God's Nature by *particular Providences*.
Fifthly, Taking up our Notions of God from *obscure* and *particular* Passages, and not from the *plain* and *general* Current of Scripture.
Sixthly, *Indevotion*.

I. One great Cause of our Misapprehensions of God, is *Ignorance* of what is the *true* Perfection of our *own* Natures. For, as I shewed before, in conceiving of the Perfections of God, we must take our *Rise* from those Perfections we behold in his *Creatures*; and particularly in our *own Natures*, wherein there is a Composition of all *created* Perfections: So that while we are ignorant of what is the true Perfection of our *own* Natures, our Thoughts can have no *Rule* or *Aim* whereby to judge of *God*'s. That he hath all those Perfections in *himself* which he hath derived to *us*, is the *Fundamental Maxim* upon which we are to erect our *Notions* of him; and therefore unless we know *what* those *Perfections* are which he hath derived to us, and *wherein* they consist, our Minds hath no *Footing* or *Foundation* whereon to raise any certain Idea of him. For since we have no other Way to conceive of *his Perfections* but by our *own*, how is it possible that while we are ignorant of our own, we should ever conceive *aright* of his? This therefore is one great Reason why Men do so *grosly* misconceive of God, because they have no true Notion of their *own* Perfection, by which they are to form their Conceptions of *his*.

For whereas the *true* Perfection of human Nature consists in *Moral Goodness*, or an *Universal* Compliance of its *Will*, *Affections* and *Actions*, with those everlasting *Laws* of *Righteousness* which *right Reason* prescribes, how many are

there that look upon this as a very *mean* and *carnal Accomplishment*, and place all their Perfection in things of a quite *different* Nature, *viz.* in the *Ebbs* and *Flows* of their *sensitive* Passions, and the extraordinary *Fermentations* of their *Blood* and *Spirits?* that is to say, in unaccountable *Dejections* and *Exaltations* of Mind, in vehement *Impressions* of *Fancy*, and mechanical *Movements* of *Affection*, in *Raptures* and *Extasies*, and Hypochondriacal *Incomes* and *Manifestations*, that have nothing of *substantial* Virtue or Piety in them, nor commonly any other Effect but to cause Men to *renounce* that Righteousness which they never *had*, and *rely* upon that which they have no *Title* to, and to *sooth* and *tickle* their Fancies, and *blow* them *up* into *glorious* Opinions of themselves, and *triumphant* Assurances of their being the *Darlings* and *Favourites* of God: whilst poor *moral* Men, that make Conscience of *regulating* their *Affections* and *Actions* by the eternal *Laws* of *Righteousness*, are look'd upon by them with a *scornful* Compassion, and placed in the *lowermost* Form of Sinners, at the greatest Distance from the Kingdom of God. Now when Men take such *false* Measures of their own Perfection, how is it possible they should conceive *aright* of the Perfections of God, which they have no other Way to conceive of but by *arguing* from their *own?* Wherefore, in order to the forming our Ideas of *God*'s Perfections, it is necessary we should first fix the *true* Notion of our *own*; which is no hard Matter for us to do. For our Nature being *reasonable*, to be sure its Perfection must consist in willing, affecting, and acting *reasonably*, or which is the same thing, in *governing* itself in all its *Relations* and *Circumstances*, by those immutable *Laws* of *Goodness* which *right Reason* prescribes, and which are *exemplified* to us in the Holy Scripture; and when we have fixt in our Minds this *Notion* of our *own* Perfection, it will naturally conduct our Thoughts to *God*'s, and let us see that his Perfection consists not in a *lawless* and *boundless* Will, that *decrees* without *Foresight*, *resolves* without *Reason*, and *wills* because it *will*, and then *executes* its own *blind* and *unaccountable* Purposes by dint of *irresistible* Power, without any regard to *Right* or *Wrong*: For, if we rightly understand our *own* Perfection, we cannot but discern, that such a Will as *this* is one of the most *monstrous* Deformities in Nature, because it is the most diametrically *opposite* to the *true* Idea of our own Perfection, which while we *attentively* fix our Eyes on, we cannot but *infer* from it, that the true *Perfection* of God consists in the *unvariable* Determination of his *Will* by the all-comprehending *Reason* of his *Mind*, or in *choosing* and *refusing*, *decreeing* and *executing* upon such Reasons as best becomes a *God* to *will* and *act* on, *i. e.* upon such as are infinitely *wise*, and *good*, and *just*, and *merciful*. For, if to will and act upon such Reasons as *these* be the Perfection of *our* Nature, we cannot but conclude that it is the Perfection of *God*'s too; but if we are *ignorant* of our own Perfection, we must necessarily think of God *at rovers*, without any certain *Aim* or *Rule* to *square* and *direct* our Apprehensions.

II. Another Cause of our Misapprehension of God is, our framing our Notions of him according to the *Model* of our own particular *Humour* and *Temper*. For *Self-love* being the most *vehement* Affection of human Nature, and that upon which all its *other* Affections are founded, there is no one Vice to which we are more universally obnoxious than that of excessive *Fondness* and *Partiality* to our selves, which makes us too often *dote* upon the *Deformities*, and even *idolize* the *Vices* of our own Temper. So that whether our Nature be *stern*, *sour* and *imperious*, or *fond*, *easy* and *indulgent*, we are apt to *admire* it as a *great* Perfection merely because it is *ours*, without *measuring* it by those eternal *Reasons* which are the *Rules* of *Good* and *Evil*, *Perfection* and *Imperfection*, and then, whatever we look upon as a Perfection in *our selves*, we naturally attribute to *God*, who is the *Cause* and *Fountain* of all Perfection. And hence it comes to pass, that Mens Minds have been always tinctur'd with such *false* and *repugnant* Opinions of God, because they frame their Judgments

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of him not so much by their *Reason* as by their *Temper* and *Humour*; and so their *different* Humours being not only *unreasonable* in themselves, but *repugnant* and contrary to one another, produce in them not only *false* and *unreasonable*, but *contrary* and *repugnant* Opinions of God. Thus for Instance, the *Epicureans*, who were a *soft* and *voluptuous* Sect, entirely addicted to *Ease* and *Pleasure*, fansied God to be *such an one as themselves*, a Being that was wholly *sequestred* from Action, and *confined* to an extramundane Paradise, where he lived in perfect *Ease*, and was entertained with infinite *Luxuries*, without ever concerning his *Thoughts* with any thing *abroad*; for *this* they thought was the Top of all Perfection, and therefore *thus* they would have chosen to live had *they* been *Gods* themselves. Thus the *Stoicks* who were a sort of very *morose* and *inflexible* People, copied their Notions of God from their own *Complexion*, supposing him to be an *inflexible* Being, that was utterly incapable of being *moved* and *affected* by the *Reasons* of things, but was wholly governed by a *stern* and *inexorable* Fate. And accordingly, the *Scythians* and *Thracians*, the *Gauls* and *Carthaginians*, who were a People of a *bloody* and *barbarous* Nature, pictured their Gods from their own *Temper*, imagining them to be of a *blood-thirsty* Nature, that delighted to feed their hungry Nostrils with the nidorous *Reeks* and *Steams* of humane *Gore*. Whereas, on the contrary, the *Platonists*, who were generally of a very *soft* and *amorous* Nature, took their Measure of God thereby, and so framed an Idea of him that was as *soft* and *amorous* as their own *Complexion*, composed altogether of *Loves* and *Smiles* and *Endearments*, without the least Intermixture of *Vengeance* and *Severity*, how *just* soever in itself, or *necessary* to the Well-government of the World. Thus as the *Æthiopians* pictured their *Gods* black because they were *black* themselves, so generally Men have been always prone to represent God in the *Colour* of their *own Complexions*; which is the Cause that they many times represent him so *utterly unlike* to *himself*, because out of an unreasonable *Partiality* to themselves, they first mistake the *Deformities* of their own Natures for *Perfections*, and then *deify* them into *divine Attributes*. *Thou thoughtest*, saith God, *that I was altogether such an one as thy self*, Psal. 50. 21. that is, Thou didst frame thy Conceptions of me according to the Pattern of thy own *ill Nature*, and so thoughtest *basely* and *unworthily* of me. And hence, I doubt not, spring most of those *Misapprehensions* of God which have been received among *Christians*. For how is it possible for any *Man* that is not of a *fierce* and *cruel* Nature *himself*, to believe it *consistent* with the *Nature* of *God*, to snatch poor *Infants* from their Mother's Womb, that never *actually* offended him, and hurl them into the Flames of Hell? And considering the *stern* and *inflexible Temper* of the famous Author of the *Horrible Decree*, tho otherwise a rare and admirable Person, there is too much reason to suspect that he transcribed his own *Nature* into his *Doctrine*, and modelled his *Divinity* by his *Temper*. And so on the contrary, Who but a Man of excessive *Fondness* and *Partiality*, that *loves* beyond all *Reason*, and invincibly *doats* upon the *Deformities* of his *own* Darlings, could ever imagine it consistent with the *Wisdom* and *Holiness* of *God* to *choose* his Favourites without *Reason*, and when he hath chosen them, not only to *overlook* all their *Faults*, but to hide them from his own Eyes with the *Mantle* of another's *Righteousness*; that so, how *ill* soever they behave themselves he may never see Cause to be displeased with them? from these and other Instances it is evident, that one great Cause of our Misapprehensions of *God* is, our measuring *his* Nature by *our own*. For first, our *Partiality* to our *selves* makes us magnify our own *Faults* into *Perfections*, and then whatsoever we reckon a Perfection in *ourselves*, we naturally attribute to *God*, and so many times it comes to pass, that our Notions of God are nothing but the Images of our selves, which, *Narcissus* like, we fall in Love with for no other Reason, but because they *reflect* our *sweet Likeness*. As therefore we would not *wrong* God in our own *Thoughts*,

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we must take care not to attribute to *Him* any thing of our *own*, but what is a *Perfection* in the Judgment of the most *impartial Reason*; and because our *Self-love* is apt to *bribe* our own *Reason* into a favourable Opinion of whatever is our *own*, we ought to admit nothing of our own into our Notion of God, but what is *voted* a Perfection by the *common Reason* of *Mankind*.

III. Another Cause of our Misapprehensions of God is, our obstinate *Partiality* to our own sinful *Lusts* and *Affections*. For while Men are *vehemently* addicted to any *sinful* Courses, the true *Notion* of *God* must needs sit very *uneasily* on their Minds, because it will be always *quarrelling* with them, *suggesting* Arguments against them, and *alarming* them with *dreadful* Thoughts and *dire* Abodings of a Vengeance to come. For there is no *true* Conception of *God's Nature* but what is pregnant with some *powerful* Argument against *Disobedience* to his *Will*: So that while we obstinately persist in Disobedience to him, our *Reason* cannot truly *conceive* of him without waging *War* with our *Lusts*. And while a Man is thus at *Variance* with himself, and *one* End of his Soul is at *War* with the *other*, so that he cannot *gratify* his Affection without *affronting* his Reason, nor *comply* with his Reason without doing *violence* to his Affection, he can never be at ease *within*, till either he hath forced his Affection to submit to his Reason, or his Reason to submit to his Affection; but while a Man's Reason hath the *true* Notion of God and his Perfections before it, 'twill be impossible for him to *reconcile* it to his sinful *Affections*, against which, whenever he *coolly* reflects, it must necessarily dictate *bitter* Invectives, and denounce *horrible* Sentences. So that if he be *obstinatly* resolved to side with his sinful *Affections*, he must either be content patiently to endure the *Clamour* and *Fury* of his own *Reason*, which is one of the most *uneasy* Penances in the World, or endeavour to *corrupt* and *sophisticate* his *Notions* of God with such Opinions as countenance his Lusts. And this, considering the mighty *Influence* which Mens *Affections* have on their *Reason*, is no hard Matter to do; for the *least Shew* of *Probability*, back'd with a *strong* Affection for an Opinion, is of greater Force with *corrupt* Minds, than the clearest *Demonstration* against it. So that if the *Opinion* be but serviceable to the Interest of a Man's *Lust*, *that* will engage his *Affection* on its Side, and then the Opinion having once retained those *powerful* Orators in its Cause, it is secure of a very *favourable* Trial at the Tribunal of Reason, where in all Probability only *one* Side of the Question will be weighed, and Judgment will be given upon hearing the Arguments *for* it, without admitting any *Evidence against* it.

Thus when Men are *hunted* and *pursued* thro' their *wicked Courses* by the *true Notions* of God, it is expedient for them, if they resolve to *go on*, to take Sanctuary in *false* Ones, where their *Conscience* and *Will*, their *Reason* and *Affections* may dwell *quietly* together, and they may be as wicked as they please without any *Disturbance*. And Abundance of such false Notions there are *prepared* to their Hands, which Men's wicked Minds have *invented* in the Defence of their Lusts: For thus some, to *ease* their guilty Conscience, have persuaded themselves, that God is so wholly *taken up* with his own Happiness, as that he is not *at Leisure* to concern himself about *human* Actions, and under this Persuasion they sin on with full Security that he will never *punish* them. Others, on the contrary, to reconcile their Lusts, persuade themselves that God is wonderfully concerned about *small* Things, about *trifling* Opinions, and indifferent Actions, and the *Rites*, and *Modes*, and Appendages of his Worship, and under this Persuasion they hope to *atone* him for all the Immoralities of their *Lives*, by the *Forms* and *Outsides* of Religion, by *uncommanded* Severities and *affected* Singularities, by *contending* for Opinions and *stickling* for Parties,

 and

and being pragmatically *zealous* about the *Borders* and *Fringes* of Religion. Others there are that to *quiet* their *anxious* Minds, persuade themselves that God, *in Christ* at least, is all *Mercy* and *Goodness*, without the least allay of righteous *Severity*, or vindictive *Justice*; and being thus persuaded, they sin on *securely*, and under the Wing of his Mercy *affront* his Authority, without any *disturbance*. Others again, that to *stifle* the Sense of their own *Guilt*, persuade themselves that God hath *irrevocably* determined the *everlasting* Fate of Men without any respect to their *doings*; and that those whom he *will* save, he will save *irresistibly* without any *Concurrence* of *theirs*, whereas those whom he will *not* save, he hath utterly *abandoned* to a dire *necessity* of *perishing* for ever; from whence they conclude, that if they are of the *Number* of those that shall be *saved*, it is *needless* for them to endeavour *after it*, and if in the List of those that shall *perish*, it is *in vain* for them to endeavour to *prevent* it; and that therefore their wisest Course is to *sin on*, and expect the *Event*. All which are only the Artifices of Wickedness, to *reconcile* Mens *Consciences* to their *Lusts*, and *compromise* the *Quarrel* between *God* and their *wicked Lives*, that so they may sin on for the future, without *Check* or *Remorse*.

Wherefore if we would form a *right* Notion of God in our Minds, and preserve it *pure* and *unsophisticated*, we must above all things beware not to let our *Lusts* intermingle with our *Reasonings* about him, or to *bribe us* to *assent* to any *Opinion* concerning him. For this is an eternal Maxim, That there is nothing can be *true* of the *most holy* God, that gives the least *countenance* or *protection* to *Sin*; and therefore when ever it makes for the *Interest* of our *Lusts* to *believe* any *Opinion* of him, for *that Reason* we ought to reject it; for nothing can be true of God that is not perfectly consistent with his *infinite Holiness*, and nothing can be consistent with his infinite Holiness that is any way serviceable to the *interest* of *Sin*; so that while we suffer our sinful Interests to *dictate* to us our *Opinions* of God, we make *Falshood* our *Oracle*, and the very *Foundation* of our *Faith* is a *Lye*.

IV. Another great Cause of our Misapprehensions of God, is our measuring his Nature by *particular Providences*. *The Tree is known by its Fruit*, is the common Rule by which Men judge of *God* as well as of *one another*, and it is most certain that every free Agent *is* as it *doth*, that the ordinary Course of its *Actions* is an infallible *Index* of the inward *Dispositions* and *Inclinations* of its Mind; but, as for the Actions of God, they are not to be judged of singly and apart from one another, because they have all *one* general *Drift* and *Tendency*, and so are mutually *dependent* upon one another, and closely linked together, even from the *first* to the *second*, and so on to the *last*, in one continued *Chain* and *Series*; so that of all those innumerable Actions whereof his general Providence consists, there is no one *loose* or *independent* Link, but every *one* is connected unto *all* the rest, and all the *rest* to *every one* thro'out that mighty Chain. Wherefore unless we had an *entire Prospect* of the whole *Series* of God's Actions, and of the mutual *Respects* and *Relations* which they bear to one another, it is impossible for us, without a *Divine Revelation*, to make any *certain* Judgment of *Particulars*. For tho *this* or *that* particular Action or Providence of God, considered *separately* from all the rest, may have a very *pernicious* and *malebolent* Aspect, yet it is to be considered, that no *Action* of God is what it *would be* if it were *apart* by itself, but what it *is* in *Conjunction* with all the rest of his Actions, and that *that* which by *itself* might prove very *pernicious*, may by being *contempered* with *others* of a *different* Nature become exceeding *beneficial* to the World. For so in the Heavens there are sundry Stars of a very *malignant* Aspect apart by *themselves*, which yet in *Conjunction* with other Stars of a *different* Temper do many times derive a most *benign* Influence upon us. And if Men can give no certain Judgment of any single *Act* or *Scene* of *God's Providence*, without comprehending at once the

whole *Drama*, how is it possible they should take *true* Measures of his *Nature* by any *particular* Event that befals them? For, for all they know, those very *Events* which *singly* considered are *most noxious* to the World, may be *most beneficial*, as they are *intermingled* and *contempered* with other Providences; so that while they measure *God* by *single* Events, they will many times deduce *sour* and *rigid Opinions* of him, from those very Providences which are the highest Instances of his *Benignity* and *Goodness*. Thus, for Instance, should *Joseph* have framed his *Judgment* of *God*'s *Nature* by his being thrown into the *Pit*, sold into *Egypt*, and there cast into *Prison* for his *Integrity* and *Innocence*, what could he have thought of him, but that he was a very *envious* and *malicious* Being, that took *Delight* in *afflicting* Innocence, and *sported* himself with the *Miseries* of his Creatures? And yet considering what *followed* upon these sad Providences, and how *these* were all of them but so many *Steps* to his *Advancement*, it is plain, that had he thought *thus*, he had thought very *injuriously*; those *very* Providences from which he must have inferred God's *Malice* to him, being, in *Conjunction* with what followed, most illustrious Instances of his *Goodness* towards him.

And yet how *commonly* do we see Men pass Judgment on God's *Nature* from such *particular* Providences? They see a World of *deplorable Accidents*, such as *Famines*, *Butcheries*, *Plagues*, and *Devastations*, in which themselves are many times involved, from whence they are ready to conclude, that certainly *God* would never *inflict* or *suffer* these Things, if he were not of a very *froward*, *cruel*, and *implacable* Nature; whereas did they but see these *sad* Accidents as they lie *interwoven* with all the *rest* of his Providences, they would doubtless see infinite Reason to conclude the quite *contrary*. Sometimes again they behold Wickedness *prosper* in this World, and Virtue and Innocence *depressed* and *trampled on*, from whence they are ready to conclude either that *that* which we *call* Vice and Virtue are things *indifferent* to God, or that he is *unjust* in the Distribution of *Rewards* and *Punishments*; whereas had they an *entire* Comprehension of the whole *Train* and *Series* of his Providence, they would soon be convinced that even in these *cross* Distributions he doth most *equally* and most *effectually* punish the *Wicked*, and reward the *Good*, by rendering the *one*'s Prosperity his *Bane*, and the *other*'s Adversity his *Restorative*. Sometimes again, they are *denied* those *Blessings* and *Deliverances* which they have a long while *sought* with most importunate *Cries* and *Supplications*, from whence they are ready to conclude, that God is of a *stern* and *inexorable* Nature, not to be *moved* or *prevailed with* by *Prayers* and *Intreaties*; whereas, could they but see thro' the whole *Drift* of his Providence, they would easily be satisfied that the Goods they *pray* for, are many times *pregnant* with *Evils*, and the Evils they *deprecate* with *Goods*, which are much *greater* than *themselves*, and that *that* is the Reason why God was *deaf* to their *Intreaties*, because he could not *grant* them what they *asked* without doing them some great *Unkindness*; and that therefore these Denials are so far from arguing him *stern* and *inexorable*, that on the contrary, they are signal Instances of his tender *Mercy* and *Compassion* towards us. If therefore we would conceive *aright* of God, we must not take our Measures of his Nature by *particular Providences*, which many times *import* quite contrary to what they *seem* and *appear*; but having formed our Notions of his Nature out of those *Perfections* we behold in his *Creatures*, by *them* we are to measure all his *particular* Providences, which tho they are sometimes very *dark* and *obscure*, and *seemingly* repugnant to our common Notions of him, yet because we see not the *Ends* and *Reasons* of them, we ought to conclude them *good*, because they proceed from a *good God*.

V. Another main Cause of our Misapprehensions of God, is the taking up our Notions of him from *dark*, and *obscure*, and *single* Passages, and not from the *plain* and *general* Current of Scripture. There is no doubt, but

that

that whatsoever God hath *revealed* of himself in Scripture, is *true*, because *Truth* and *Veracity*, being a great *Perfection* in *itself*, must needs be included in *his* Nature, which is the Centre of *all* Perfection; but yet, since there are some things in Scripture hard to be understood *in themselves*, and other Things difficult to *us*, who are not thorowly acquainted with the *Customs* and *Controversies* they refer to, or with the *Phrase* and *Language* of the Age they were written *in*, it is impossible for us many Times to comprehend its Meaning by the mere *Clink* and *Sound* of its *Words*, without expounding its *obscure* Passages by its *plain* ones, and its *particular* Propositions by its *general* Current; and to found any *Doctrine* or *Opinion* upon *obscure* and *particular* Phrases, that *seemingly* contradicts the *plain* and *general* Drift, and then to expound the *plain* into the *seeming* Sense of the *obscure*, and the *general* Current into the *seeming* Sense of the *particular* Phrase, is a most egregious *Prevarication* on the Holy Scripture. And yet this *unreasonable* Practice hath occasioned many *false* Apprehensions of God in Mens Minds. For there is nothing more evident, than that all along thro' the *general* Current of Scripture, God is represented to us as a most *benevolent* Being, that knows no *Bounds* of *Good-will*, but *stretches* out his *Arms* unto *all* his Creation, and *receives* his whole Offspring, excepting only those *Prodigals* that run away from him, with *free* and *impartial* Embraces; as one that *would have all Men to be saved, and to come to the Knowledge of the Truth*, and *readily* contributes to them all those *Aids* and *Assistances* that are necessary to the effecting of these *blessed* Ends; that *reprobates* none from his *Kindness* and *Favour* but only such as *despise* and *reject* it, and never *abandons* any to *Wretchedness* and *Misery* till they have first *baffled* and *defeated* all his *Arts* of *saving* them. Such is the Representation of God which the *plain* and *general* Scope of Scripture gives us; so that had Men kept themselves to *this* Rule of expounding *obscure* Texts of Scripture by *plain* ones, and *particular* Phrases by the *general* Scope, when they *seemingly* clash one with another, they had done *Right* to God, and *secured* their *own* Minds against sundry very *wrongful* Apprehensions of him. For that God hath *destined* the *greatest* Part of Mankind to *endless* Calamity, without any *Respect* to their *Doings*; that he hath *two* Wills, *viz.* a *secret* and a *revealed* one; that his *revealed* Will is, that he would have *all* Men to be *saved*, and his *secret* one, that he would have the *greatest* Part of them *perish*; that he hath imposed a Law upon Men which without his *irresistible Grace* they *cannot* obey, and notwithstanding he hath decreed to *with-hold* this Grace from the *greatest* Part of them, is resolved to persecute *all* that do not obey it with *everlasting* Flames of *Vengeance*: These, I say, are all of them such Opinions as *reflect* very *dishonourably* upon God, and have no other Foundation, but a *few particular* Phrases, and *obscure* Passages in Scripture, not only *Abundance* of *plain* Texts, but the *general* Drift and Scope of it being of a quite *contrary* Sense. So that had but this *necessary* Rule been observed, of interpreting *dark* Passages by *plain*, and *particular* ones by the *general* Scope, such *dishonourable* Opinions of God could never have found *Shelter* under *Scripture Authority*. For I would fain know, whether those Texts which declare God to be an *universal Lover* of the Souls of men, be not far more *numerous* and *plain*, than those which *seemingly* restrain his Affection to a *small select* Number, and *reprobate* all the *rest* of Mankind? and if it be so, as I think no modest Man can deny, how can this Doctrine be deduced from Scripture, without forcing the far *greater* Number of Texts to subscribe to the *smaller*, and the *plainer* to the *obscurer*; which is *contrary* to the most necessary *Rules* of *Interpretation*, and which, if *pursued*, will open a wide Door to the *grossest* and most *fulsome* Errors in Religion. Wherefore, to secure our Minds from *false* Apprehensions of God, it is necessary that in consulting the *Scripture* concerning him, we should follow the *plain* and *general* Drift of it, and not entertain any Opinion of him

upon the Credit of a *few*, or of *obscure* Texts, which *more* or *plainer* ones seemingly contradict. For it is certain, that *that* Opinion is either *false*, or of *little* Moment that hath but *one* or *two* Texts to countenance it, and *that* very *dubious*, which hath none but *obscure* Texts to rely on; but when there are more and much plainer *against* it than *for* it, it must be *false*, or there is no *relying* upon Scripture, the Sense whereof, as to all *particular* Opinions, must be supposed to be that which the *most* and *plainest* Texts do countenance. So that he who embraces any Opinion that hath *more* and *plainer* Texts *against* it than *for* it, embraces it for its *own* sake, and nor for the *Scriptures*.

VI. And lastly, Another Cause of our Misapprehensions of God is, the great *Dissimilitude* and *Contrariety* of *our* Natures to *his*. For when Men have nothing of *God* in them, nothing of those amiable *Graces* which are the *Glory* and *Lustre* of his Nature, it is impossible they should have any *Experience* of him, any inward *Taste* or *Relish* of his Perfections; so that they can only know him by the *hearing of the Ear*, by *Books*, and dry *Discourse* and *Reasoning*, which compared with *experimental* Knowledge, is very *uncertain* and *defective*. For between the *notional* and the *experimental* Knowledge of God, there is the same Difference as between the Knowledge of a *Geographer* and a *Traveller*: The *one* hath only a *faint* and *rude* Figure of *foreign* Countries in his Head, copied from the *Globe* or *Geographical* Descriptions; whereas the *other* having travelled thro' them, and *beheld* their *Situations*, and *Cities*, and *Rivers*, and *conversed* with their *People*, and *tasted* their *Fruits*, retains a *clear* and *lively* Idea of them, of the *Exactness* whereof he hath as *firm* a Certainty as of the Truth of his own *Senses*. Thus he who knows God only by *Books* and *Discourse*, can have but a *faint* and *imperfect* Idea of him; he may *believe* him to be infinite in all *Kinds* and *Degrees* of *Perfection*, and *Goodness*, and *Mercy*, and *Justice*, and *Truth*, and be able to *demonstrate* it upon dry Principles of *Reason*; but having no *Experience* of these Perfections in *himself*, no *Sense* or *Relish* of their *Beauty* and *Excellency*, his Apprehensions of them are but *slight* and *obscure*, like a *deaf* Man's Notions of *Sounds*, or a *blind* Man's of *Colours*, which for want of the Evidence of *Sense* cannot be so *clear*, and *certain*, and *distinct*, as theirs are who *see* and *hear*. Whereas he who *partakes* of the Perfections of God, and is in any *Degree pure* as he is *pure*, and *holy* as *he* is *holy*, hath, as it were, *travelled* into his very *Nature*, and *seen* all his Perfections by the *Light* of an infallible *Experience*; he knows what God is, not so much by *Reasoning* and *Discourse*, as by a *quick* and *lively* Sense of the Divine Perfections, which he hath *copied* and *transcribed* into his *own* Temper, and which, like the Beams of the Sun, *light up* his Thoughts to that *Fountain* of Light from whence they were *derived*. And he who hath God's *Picture* in his own *Breast*, and can see *his* Perfections in the *Graces* and *Virtues* of his own *Mind*, knows him by his *Sense* as well as by his *Reason*; he *sees* and *feels* God in the *God-like* Temper of his *own* Soul, the *Graces* whereof are so many *living* Images of God, and *sensible* Comments on his Nature, which render the Man's Notions of him not only as *clear* and *distinct*, but also as *certain* and *indubitable* as any Demonstration in *Geometry*. For there is no Evidence will give us so *full* a Certainty of Things as that of our own *Senses*, it was by *sensible* Evidence that our Saviour *demonstrated* himself to be the *Messias*, and *confuted* the Infidelity of his Apostle St. *Thomas*; and it is certain that our *bodily* Senses are not more *infallible* than is the purified Sense of our Minds. When therefore we are *transformed* into the *Likeness* of God, and made *Partakers* of his Nature, we shall have a *vital* Sense and Feeling of his Perfections *within* us, by which the *true* Notions of him will be more *confirmed* and *ascertained* to us, than by all the Reasons and *Demonstrations* in the World.

For

For *now* we shall behold the *Beauties* of *God*'s Nature in the *God-like* Dispositions of our *own*; and beholding his *Face* in the *Glass* of our Natures, whensoever we *reflect* on it, his Perfections will be as *intimate* and *familiar* to us as the Graces of our *own* Minds; which will not only *awaken* our Thoughts into *frequent* Meditations of him, but also *heighten* and *improve* our Meditations into the most *glorious* Ideas of him. For when all is done, there is no Man can *think* so *well* of God, as he who hath a *God-like* Nature, because the *resemblance* he bears to him, will not only frequently *raise up* his Thoughts to God, but also *shape* them into a *Conformity* with his Nature; whereas whilst we are unlike to God, we are not only *devoid* of all that evidence of his Perfections, which the *purified sense* of our Nature would give us, and consequently our Notions of him, for want of that Evidence, will be only *superficial* and *uncertain*; but thro' our *partiality* to our own *ungodlike* Dispositions, we shall be apt to entertain such Notions of him as are as unlike him as *our selves*: For either out of Fondness to *our selves*, we shall look upon our *ill Dispositions* as *Perfections*, and so attribute them to God; or out of fondness to *those* ill Dispositions, we shall be tempted to admit such Opinions of God as will *license* and *indulge* them.

Wherefore, if we would secure our Minds against all *false* Apprehensions of God, we must, above all Things, endeavour to *purify* our Hearts from those *evil* Dispositions which render us *unlike* him; from *Sensuality* and *Injustice*, from *Pride* and *Discontent*, from *Envy*, *Hatred*, and all *Uncharitableness*, which are the great *Corrupters* of our Minds, the bosom *Hereticks* that *seduce* and *pervert* us; and, as much as in us lies, to *conform* our selves to the nature of God, by practising the *contrary Virtues*; and when once by *imitating* the Perfections of *his* nature we have *transcribed* them into our *own*, we shall *see* and *feel* them in *our selves*, and our *Sense* of him will *conduct* our *Reason*, our *Experience* of him will correct our *Knowledge*, and our *Vision* of him *consummate* our *Faith*; and we shall be more *enlightened* in our *Knowledge* of him, by beholding *his* Face in the *sanctity* of our *own* Minds, than by a *thousand Volumes* of *curious* Speculations.

And now, having seen what the true *Causes* of all our *Misapprehensions* of God are, let us from hence-forward *beware* of them; and, so far as in us lies, labour to *avoid* them; and, considering of what *vast* advantage to our Religion *right* and *true Notions* of God are, let us *diligently* apply ourselves to the *above-named Rules* for the *regulating* our *Apprehensions* concerning him; that so having thorowly *purged* our Thoughts of all *erroneous Opinions*, we may see God *truly* as he *is*, arrayed in all the *genuine* Perfections of his Nature; and *then* we shall find our *Lives* and *Affections* under the *Influence* of the most *powerful Reasons* in the World. For every thing of God is *full* of *persuasion*, all his Perfections have a *constraining* Rhetorick in them, that by a kind of *Moral* violence *conquers* all that attend to it, and *seizes* and *captivates* their *Wills* in despight of all the *Reluctances* of their *Natures*. So that when once our Minds are thorowly instructed with the *true* Notions of God, we shall not need to seek *abroad* for *Motives* and *Arguments*, for we shall have a *Fountain* of Divine Oratory within our own *Bosoms*, from whence our *Wills* and *Affections* will be continually *watered* with the most *fruitful* Inducements to *Piety* and *Virtue*; insomuch, that which way soever we turn our selves, we shall see our selves *surrounded* with such *invincible* Reasons to *trust* in God, and to *fear* him, to *admire* and *love* him, to *obey* and *worship* him, as will *animate* our Faculties, *wing* and *inspire* our *drooping* Endeavours, and carry us on with unspeakable *Chearfulness* and *Alacrity* thro' all the *weary* Stages of Religion; and we shall no longer look upon Religion as the *burden* and *oppression* of our Nature, but readily *embrace* it as our *Ornament* and *Crown*, our *Glory* and *Happiness*; as being fully convinced, that in *serving* of *God*, we serve not only the *greatest*, but the *best* Master in the World.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Necessity *of acknowledging* Jesus Christ *to be the* One *and* Only Mediator *between* God *and* Man, *in order to our leading a Truly* Christian Life.

HITHERTO we have treated of the common Principles of Religion *in General*, but as for this *last*, it is the great Principle of *Christian* Religion, *strictly* so called, as it is distinguish'd from the Religion of *Nature*, and, as such, is *properly* the Religion of *the Mediator*, as containing *only* the *Doctrines* which *concern* the *Mediator*, and the *Duties* which *result* from those Doctrines, and *owe* their Obligations to them; both which being taken away, all the *remaining* Religion is purely *Natural* and *Moral*: So that this Principle we are *now* treating of, contains in it all that Religion which is strictly *Christian*; without *believing* of which, and *practising* upon it, we cannot be truly said to lead a *Christian Life*, how well soever we may live. For there is no doubt, but upon the Motives and Principles of *natural Religion*, a Man to whom Christianity was never *sufficiently* proposed, may upon due *Consideration*, and a hearty *Endeavour*, reclaim himself to a very *pious* and *virtuous* Life, as it is apparent many of the Heathen Philosophers did; but no Man can be *pious* or *virtuous* in the *Christian* Sense, who is not *so* upon the *Christian Obligations*: For the *Principles* from and by which we act, are the very *Life* and *Soul* of our Religion; and therefore as it is the *Rational Soul* that specifies the *Man* a *Rational Animal*, so it is our *Christian Principles* that specify our Religion *Christian Religion*. Wherefore, tho the *Piety* and *Virtue* of an *Heathen* may be *materially* the *same* with that of a *Christian*; yet it is impossible it should be *formally Christian*, unless it be *animated* and acted with the *belief* of *Christianity*. So that if we leave out *this*, and practise only upon the *above-named* Principles, we are at best but *wise* and *honest Heathens*, and there is nothing in all our Religion but the *simple* Dictates of *mere natural* Reason. 'Tis true, to live according to mere Natural Reason is all that God expects from those to whom *Christianity* hath never been *proposed*; for how can he expect that they should live by Principles which they either never *heard of*, or have not *sufficient* reason to *believe*? But where Christianity hath been *made known*, and sufficiently *proposed*, we cannot be *good Men*, unless we *believe it*; and if we believe it, we cannot be *good Christians* unless we *practise* upon it. And since Christianity hath *improved* the Duties of *Natural Religion* upon new *Principles*, and *enforced* them with new *Obligations*, to render our Piety and Virtue *strictly* and *properly* Christian, it is necessary we should *believe* these new Principles, and *act* upon these new Obligations; otherwise we are at best but mere *Natural Men*, in the true sense of the Apostle: *i. e.* Men who are merely conducted by the light of Natural Reason, and have not *received the Things of the Spirit of God*, that is, the *new* Principles and Obligations which *Christianity superadds* to Natural Religion, 1 *Cor.* ii. 14.

In handling therefore of this *great* and *necessary* Principle of *Christian Life*, *viz.* the *belief* and *acknowledgment* of Christ's being the *one* and *only* Mediator, I shall endeavour these *Three* Things:

First, To shew what it is that we are to believe in *General*, concerning the *Person* and *Office* of this *Mediator*.

Secondly, What are the particular *Parts* and *Offices* of his *Mediation*.

Thirdly, What *Evidence* there is to induce us to *believe* him to be this *one* and *only* Mediator.

SECT.

SECT. I.

What it is that we are to believe in General, *concerning the* Person *and* Office *of this* Mediator.

THE Greek word Μεσίτης, which we translate *Mediator*, signifies one that *interposes* between *Two* Parties, either to *obtain* some *favour* from the *one* Party for the *other*, or to *adjust* or *make up* some *Difference* between them. And this Undertaking of his, is either, first, of his *own head*, and *voluntary*, undertaking without any *Warrant* or *Authority* from the *Parties* between whom he interposes, in which case he acts altogether *precariously*, and as a mere *Orator*, and can only *persuade* and *intreat* on both Sides: or Secondly, it is *Authoritative*, and this is Two Ways; First, when the Person who *mediates* is *authorized* thereunto by the *consent* and *designation* of *both* Parties, both being *equal*, and consequently having an equal *right* to authorize him: For when the Parties are *equal*, he must be authorized by *both*, before he can pretend to any right to *oblige* and *determine* them; but when once both Parties have *agreed* to put their Case into *his* Hands, and refer themselves to *his* Determination, he from thenceforth commences a *Mediator* by *Office*, and is the *Legal Representative* of both, as being authorized by them to act in *their* stead, in all those Points that are *referred* by them to his Determination. So that whatsoever he doth, in the matter before him, is in effect the Act of *both* Parties, who having both submitted *their* Wills to *his*, and voluntarily impowered him to will *for* them both, are thereupon as effectually *concluded* and *determined* by what *he* doth, as if it were their own *personal* Will and Action. And in this sense a *Mediator* is the same with that which we in *English* call an *Umpire*, who is one that *acts* for *both* Parties by *Authority* from *both*, and in whose *Judgment* and *Determination* both have obliged themselves to *consent* and *agree*. But then, Secondly, the Mediation is *Authoritative*, when he who *mediates* is *authorized* thereunto by a *superior* Party, who hath a just *Authority* and *Dominion* over the *inferior*. For when a Mediator acts the Part of Two *unequal* Parties, whereof the one is *superior*, and hath a just dominion over the *other*, it is sufficient that he be authorized by the appointment of the *superior*; and the *subject* or *inferior* Party will be as much *obliged* by his *Determination*, as if he had *voluntarily* referred *himself* to him. For a Mediator between a *Superior*, as such, and a *Subject*, is one who is authorized to act on the part of the Superior, in *requiring* the Subject's *Duty* and *Obedience*, and to act on the part of the Subject in *impetrating* the Superior's *Favour* and *Protection*; and there can be no doubt but every *absolute* Superior hath Right to authorize a Mediator between *him* and his *Subjects*, to act for *him* in *ruling* them, and for *them* in *soliciting* his favour. For he who mediates between a *Sovereign* and a *Subject*, is the Sovereign's *Vicegerent* and the Subject's *Advocate*; and he who *without* our *Consent* hath a right to our *Duty*, and to all the *Favours* he bestows upon us, may, whether we consent to it or no, *demand* our *Duty* by what Vicegerent, and *bestow* his *Favours* by what Advocate he pleases. And as for the *Subject*, he will be *obliged*, whether it be by his Consent or no, to *abide* by the *Mediator* whom the Sovereign *appoints*, and by the *Terms* which he shall *impose* on him; otherwise he will be *justly* liable to *Punishment*.

Having given this short account of the *General* Notion of a *Mediator*, I proceed to shew what it is *in the General*, that the Scripture proposes to our belief, concerning the *Person* and *Office* of this great *Mediator* between God and Men; the whole of which I shall reduce under these *Six* Heads:

First,

First, That he is *design'd* and *authoriz'd* to this *Office* by God, who is our absolute *Lord* and *Sovereign.*

Secondly, That this Office to which he is authorized, consists in acting *for* and on the *behalf* of God and Men, who are the *Parties* between whom he mediates.

Thirdly, That this his Mediation proceeds upon certain *Terms* and *Stipulations* between God and Men, which he obtained of God *for* us, and in his Name hath published and tendered *to* us.

Fourthly, That as he acts for and in the behalf of God and Men, so he partakes of the *Natures* of *both.*

Fifthly, That as he partakes of the Natures of both, so, that he might transact personally *with* both, he was *sent down* from Heaven to *us,* and is *returned* again from us to *Heaven.*

Sixthly, That upon his Return from us to Heaven, there to mediate personally for *Men* with *God,* he substituted the *Divine* and *Omnipresent Spirit,* personally to *promote* and *effectuate* his Mediation for *God* with *Men.*

I. That he is *designed* and *authorized* to this *Office* by God, who is our absolute *Lord* and *Sovereign.* For since God, for *just* and *excellent* Reasons, was resolved not to converse with sinful Men *immediately,* they having rendred themselves, thro' their woful *degeneracy,* utterly *unfit* for, and *unworthy* of any such *near* and *close* access to His most Holy Majesty; and since his tender *Mercy* and *Compassion* towards us would not permit him utterly to *reject* and *abandon* us, there was no expedient, at least that *we* know of, in which the *Holiness* of His *Majesty* could so fairly *accord* with the *tenderness* of his *Mercy,* as *this* of transacting with us by a *Mediator,* by whose *inter-agency, He,* tho a most *Holy* Sovereign, may, without *debasing* himself, freely converse with *us;* and *we,* tho his *guilty* Subjects, may, without *terror* and *anxiety,* as freely draw near unto *him:* But, by virtue of his essential *Sovereignty* and absolute *Dominion* over us, the *right* of *choosing* and *appointing* this Mediator was *wholly* in him; because, as I shew'd just before, he only can have the right of appointing the Person who shall be *his* Vicegerent and *our* Advocate, who is the Sovereign *Lord* of our *Beings,* and the supreme *Disposer* of all our *Blessings.* And accordingly he hath constituted the *Holy* and *Blessed Jesus* to be the *sole* Mediator between *himself* and *us,* to exercise his Authority *over* us, and to procure for, and convey his Favours *to* us; and hence he is called the *Christ,* or *Messias of God;* that is, his *anointed.* Anointing with Oil being antiently the *visible* Sign by which the *Regal, Priestly* and *Prophetick* Offices were confer'd. This Title of the *Lord's Anointed,* therefore, being applied to *Jesus,* denotes his being *designed, appointed,* and *authorized* by God to this *great* Office of *Mediator,* in which all those *Three* Offices are included. For so, *Acts* v. 31. we are told, *Him, i. e.* Christ, *hath God exalted with his right Hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance unto* Israel, *and Forgiveness of Sins;* And Acts ii. 36. *Therefore let all the House of* Israel *know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ;* and, to name no more, *Phil.* ii. 9, 10, 11. *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.* The *belief* of which is absolutely *necessary* to create in our Minds the *reverence* that is due to our *Holy Religion.* For unless we suppose the *founder* of it to be *authorized* and *commissioned* by God, we must *strip* and *disarm* it of all its *Authority,* and look upon it at best but as a *pious Imposture,* contrived on purpose to *chouse* Men of their *Sins* and to *train* and *delude* them into *Piety* and *Virtue.* For as it is a *Religion,* it can have no *Authority* but *Divine,* and a Divine Authority it cannot have, unless the *Author* of it had a *Divine Commission;* but supposing him to be commissioned from

 God,

God, we owe the ſame *reſpect* and *reverence* to his Religion as if God himſelf had *proclaimed* it to us in an *audible* voice from the Battlements of Heaven; and it will be no leſs *diſreſpect* to the Divine Majeſty for us to *contemn* and *ſlight* what *he*, as *God's Mouth*, hath delivered to us, than it would have been for a *Jew* to have *laughed* at the Ten Commandments, while God himſelf was proclaiming them from Mount *Sinai* in a voice of Thunder. For, if we *believe* that God authorized *him* to reveal his Will to us, we muſt believe his voice to be the *voice of God*, who ſpake to us by him as by a *living Oracle*; and conſequently, that in refuſing to *hear* and to *obey* him, we ſtop our Ears againſt *God*, and do in effect declare, that we regard what he ſaith no more than we do the whiſtling of the Wind. And as the belief of Chriſt's being commiſſion'd and appointed by God, is highly neceſſary to *create* in us a due reverence for his Religion, ſo it is no leſs *requiſite* to create in us a due *truſt* and *confidence* in his *Interceſſion* for us. For had he *thruſt* himſelf upon this Office, without any *Call* or *Commiſſion* from God, God would have been no way obliged to *hear* him, how *earneſtly* ſoever he had ſupplicated in our behalf; but ſince he *interceeds* for us by God's *own* Commiſſion, we may *depend* upon it that God will be always *ready* to hear him, and *graciouſly* accept our *Addreſſes* to him, whenever they are *preſented* by his Hand. For ſince God appointed him to be our *Advocate*, it muſt be either with an intent to *hear* him in our *behalf*, and if *ſo*, we may be ſure his *Ears* will be always *open* to him; or with a deſign to *mock* and *ridicule him* him, and *recreate* his own *inexorable* ſpleen, with the *ſpiteful* pleaſure of *denying* and *repulſing* him, which to imagine of God, is no leſs *ſenſeleſs* than *blaſphemous*. Since therefore he *Advocates* for us by God's own *Commiſſion*, we may be ſure his *Plea* in our behalf, will be always *acceptable* and *ſucceſsful*, ſince in repulſing him, he muſt in effect affront his *own* Authority, by *which* he interceeds for us.

II. That this Office to which he is authorized, conſiſts in acting *for*, and in the *behalf* of God and Men, who are the *Parties* between whom he mediates. And this is implied in the very *Notion* of an *authorized Mediator*, who, as *ſuch*, is an Agent between *Two* Parties, acting by Authority for *both*, in order to the *adjuſting* ſome *difference* between them, and *reducing* them to a mutual *accord* and *agreement*; and if he act only for one Party, he is not a *Mediator*, but an *Attorney*: and accordingly the Apoſtle tells us, that *a Mediator is not a Mediator of one, but God is one*, Gal. iii. 20. For the better underſtanding of which Words, it is to be conſider'd, that in the foregoing Verſe, the Apoſtle had aſſerted, that *the Law was ordained by Angels in the hand of a Mediator*, that is, in the Hand of *Moſes*, who was appointed to mediate, not only for *God* with the People of *Iſrael*, but alſo for the *People of Iſrael* with God; and this, ſaith he, is implied in the very Notion of a Mediator, for *a Mediator is not of one, but God is one*, that is, God is only *one* of the *two* Parties between whom this Mediation is made, and therefore *Moſes* muſt be ſuppoſed not only to act for God with the People as *his* Vicegerent, but alſo for the People with God as *their* Advocate; in ſhort, he muſt act for *both* Parties, otherwiſe he acts not as a *Mediator*. And accordingly as *Moſes*, who was the Mediator of the *Jewiſh* Covenant, acted *for* and *between* God and the People; ſo *Jeſus Chriſt*, who is Mediator of the *Chriſtian* Covenant, is ſtiled the *one Mediator between God and Men*, 1 Tim. ii. 5. that is, that *goes between* the *two* oppoſite Parties, and tranſacts for *both*, in order to their *Accord* and *Reconciliation*; that as *God's* Vicegerent acts for *him* with *us*, in order to the reducing us to our *Duty* and *Allegiance* to him; and as *our* Advocate acts for *us* with *God*, in order to the inducing him to be *gracious* and *favourable* to us; that ſo having *prevailed* with us to *lay down* our *enmity* againſt God, and *obtained* of God to *remit* his *Diſpleaſure* againſt us, he may effect a happy *Reconciliation* between us. *Both* which Parts of his Mediation are expreſſed in thoſe Words of the Apoſtle, *Heb.* vii. 25. *Wherefore he is able to ſave to*

the uttermost those who come unto God by him; that is, who by submitting to *him*, as *mediating* for *God*, submit to God *himself*, *seeing he ever lives to make Intercession for them*, or to *mediate* with God in their *behalf*.

The *Belief* of which carries with it the most indispensable *Obligations* to *Christian Piety* and *Virtue*; but while we look upon Christ as acting only for *one* Party, whether it be for *God* or *ourselves*, we do in a great measure enervate the *Motives* of *Christianity*: For thus while we look upon him as acting only for God, that is, as God's *Vicegerent*, we must necessarily conclude, that he is concern'd only for God's *Authority*; and that when he hath secured or vindicated *that*, by *reducing* us to our *Duty*, or *punishing* our *Disobedience*, he will have no more to do with us or our *Concerns*, but even leave us to *shift* for ourselves, and to seek our *Reward* where we can find it; that he is substituted by his Father for no other end but to *exact* our *Homage*, or *revenge* our *Rebellion*; but that as for *us*, he is no way concerned either to procure us any *Pardon* for our *past Sin*, or *Reward* for our *future* Obedience; and while we look upon *him*, by whom alone we have Access to God, as one that is utterly *unconcerned* for our Welfare, we must look upon *ourselves* as *desperate* and *abandoned* Creatures, that are *utterly* forsaken of all *Hopes* and *Encouragements*: For what Hope can we have, when not only the *Deity* we are to address *to* is highly *offended* at us, but also the *Mediator* we are to address *by* is utterly *regardless* of us? And in such a *hopeless* Condition all the *Arguments* in the World are *void* and *insignificant*. And so on the other hand, while we look upon Christ as acting only for *us*, that is, as our *Propitiation* and *Advocate*, we must unavoidably conclude, that he is concerned only for *our* Preservation and Happiness; that his Office requires no more of him, but only to *pay off* the *Score* of our Sins with his Blood, and by pleading that *Payment* in Heaven, to obtain our actual *Release* from the rigorous Demands of Divine Justice; in short, that he hath nothing else to do, but only to *purchase* and *sue* out our *Pardon*, and to *justify* and set us *right* in the Court of Heaven; but as for reducing us under his Father's Authority, and subduing our *Wills* and *Lives* to his *Obedience*, that is no Part of his *Mediatorship*, nor consequently is he at all *concerned* about it; and if so, all that his *Mediation* can *oblige* us to (supposing that he hath *effectually* discharged it) is to *rest* and *rely* upon it for our *Pardon* and *Justification* with God; and if out of pure *Gratitude* we will be *dutiful* and *obedient* to him for the future, he will *kindly* accept it, but if not, he hath no *Remedy* against us; and what Likelihood is there, that any *Argument* of Religion should ever *prevail* with us to *submit* to the Divine *Authority*, so long as we *presume* upon Christ's *Mediation* for Pardon and Justification without it, and believe it to be left wholly to our own *Ingenuity*, whether we will submit or no. Thus, while we consider Christ's Mediation *by halves*, and mistake either part of it for the *whole*, we *pervert* and *deprave* it, and instead of what it is, *viz.* a most *wise* and *powerful* Inducement to *Piety* and *Virtue*, render it an inevitable *Temptation* either to *Despair* or *Presumption*, both which are *equally* and *utterly* inconsistent with a *Holy* and *Christian Life*.

But if we consider this Doctrine in its full *Extent*, as it takes in *both* Parts of Christ's Mediation, it enforces our *Duty* upon us with the most *necessary* and *powerful* Obligations: For it addresses itself to every *Passion* in us, that is capable of being *moved* and *perswaded*, and at once proposes to our *Hope* and *Fear*, which are the most *vigorous* Principles of Action, the most *encouraging* and *dreadful* Considerations: For since his Office obliges him to act for God and Men *together*, we may depend upon it, that thro' the whole Course of his *Mediation*, he will be most *just* and *impartial* to *both*; and that as on the one hand he will not so act for his Father's *Authority*, as to neglect our *Safety* and *Welfare*; so neither on the other will he so concern himself for *our* Safety and Welfare, as to expose his *Father's* Authority; and if he proceed with this exact *Equality* between the Parties he acts for, we have all the reason in

the World to conclude, that, if we *submit* ourselves to God, we shall be graciously *received* and *rewarded*; but that if we *persist* in our *Rebellion* against him, we shall be most severely *punished*.

For, in the first place, his being concerned for *us* as well as for *God*, gives us the most ample *Security*, that if we will *submit* to his Father's *Authority*, which he stands engaged to *secure* or *vindicate*, he will have a most *zealous* regard to *us* and our *Concerns*, and be as mindful of our Interest as if it were his *own*: For in undertaking to be our *Advocate*, he assumed our *Persons*, and took our *Affairs* into his *own* Hands, so that now he is *another ourselves*, and stands obliged to act for us, with as much *Care* and *Concern*, as if *our* Persons and Interests were *his*; and therefore we may depend upon it, that he will act as much for our Advantage, as we *ourselves* could do, if we were in *his* Place, and had the same *Power* and *Interest* with his Father that *he* hath; and that if we were sitting in *his* room at the Right Hand of God, and there interceeding for *ourselves*, we could not justly *wish* for, or *desire* more or greater Instances of *Grace* and *Favour*, than he will *ask* and *obtain* for us. And what greater Encouragement can we have to *return* to our *Duty*, than this very Consideration, that all our Concerns with our *offended* God, are *deposited* in the Hands of a most *faithful* Mediator, who, upon our Return, will concern himself as *zealously* for our Good, as for his *Father*'s Authority, and *solicite* our Cause in the Court of Heaven, as *industriously* as we *ourselves* could do, if we were admitted to be our *own* Advocates? But then in the second place, his being concerned for his *Father*'s Authority, as well as for our Interest, gives us as full *Assurance*, on the other hand, that he is no less obliged by his Office to *reduce* us to our *Duty* to his Father, or *avenge* him upon us for our *Disobedience*, than he is to *restore* us to his *Grace* and *Favour*; and if he should so attempt the *latter*, as to be any way deficient in the *former*, he would not perform the Part of a *just* Mediator, which consists in acting *impartially* for *both* Parties: For should he favour our *Interest* beyond his Father's *Authority*, he would be so far partial to *us* against his *Father*. Now, tho he loved us so *well* as to *sacrifice* his *Life* for us on *Earth*, and in the Virtue of that Sacrifice to appear our *Advocate* in *Heaven*, yet we can never be so *fond*, sure, as to imagine, that he loves us *better* than his own *Father*; and if he doth not, we may build upon it, that he is as *zealously* concerned to *assert* his Authority, as to *prosecute* our Interest; and to *provide* that he be *obeyed* or *avenged*, as that we be *pardoned* and *rewarded*; but for us to *rely* upon Christ, as *mediating* for *us*, without *submitting* to him as *mediating* for *God*, is in effect to hope, that he will be so *exceeding* gracious to us, as to *betray* his Father's *Trust* for *our* sake, and sacrifice *his* Authority to *our* Safety: For should he *take* our *Part* with God and *solicite* him to *favour* us while we *persist* in our *Rebellion* against him, he would in effect abandon the *Cause* and *Interest* of God's Government, and endeavour all that in him lay, to expose his *Authority* to the *Scorn* and *Contempt* of Mankind. Whilst therefore we obstinately *refuse* to hearken to him in his Mediation for *God*, that is, to *submit* to his *Laws*, and *return* to our *Duty* and *Allegiance*, he will be so far from interceeding *for* us in the Virtue of his *meritorious Sacrifice*, that he will appear against us as an *incensed* Judge in the *Quarrel* of his Father's *Authority*, and *dearly* revenge upon our *guilty* Heads all those shameless *Affronts* and *Indignities* we have offer'd it; and by making us *everlasting* Monuments of his *Vengeance*, convince us by *woful* Experience, that he is no less a *just* Mediator for *God*, than a *merciful* Mediator for *Men*. So that by resolving to *persist* in our *Rebellion* against *God*, we do in effect *renounce* the *Mediation* of our *Saviour*, and *proclaim* before God and Angels, that we will not be *beholden* to the *one* and *only* Advocate of Sinners. And when we have flung ourselves out of this Protection, Lord! whither shall we *go* for *Sanctuary* from thy Vengeance? When there is but this *one* Mediator, and he hath *discarded* me, O my wretched Soul, whither wilt thou *betake* thyself? *Call now and see, if there be any will hear thee; to which of all the Saints or Angels wilt thou*

turn thee? What *Favourite* of Heaven will *plead* thy *Cause*, when the *only* Advocate of Souls hath *rejected* thee? For if he who is my *only* Mediator, be *incensed* against me, who shall *mediate* between *me* and *him?* when God *alone* was *angry* with me, there was some hope, because my *Saviour* stands as a living Screen between *me* and *his* Displeasure, to *guard* and *defend* me from it; but when that is kindled against me too, what is there to *interpose* between me and the devouring Flame? *Be wise therefore,* O ye Sinners, *be instructed,* ye obstinate Rebels against God; *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way; for if his Wrath be kindled but a little, blessed are all they that put their Trust in him,* but Wo be to them that provoke him.

Thus the Mediation of Christ *addresses* to our *Fear* as well as *Hope*, in order to the *subduing* us to the Will of God, and *presses* at once upon *both* these great Avenues of our Souls with the most *irresistible* Motives.

III. That this his Mediation proceeds upon certain *Terms* and *Stipulations* between God and Men, which he *obtained* of God for us, and in his Name hath *published* and *tendered* to us: For when Mankind, by reason of the *Degeneracy* of Human Nature, were cut off from all *immediate* Intercourse with God, and this most *wise* and *holy* Method of conversing with us by a *Mediator*, was resolved on by the Divine Counsel, God, in consideration of what our Mediator had *engaged* himself to *suffer* for us *in the Fulness of Time*, granted to him in our behalf a most *gracious* and *merciful* Covenant, whereby he engaged himself to *bestow* his *Spirit* upon us, to *enable* us to *repent* and *return* to him, upon Condition that we should *seek* it, and *cooperate* with it; to *pardon* all our *past* Sins, upon Condition that we should unfeignedly *repent* of them; and to *crown* us with *Eternal Life*, upon Condition we should *persevere* to the End in *well-doing*. This is the Substance of that *gracious* Covenant, which God hath *granted* to us for the *sake* of our Mediator; who hath accordingly assured us from God, that he *will give his holy Spirit unto them that ask*, Luke xi. 13. That if *we will repent and be converted, our Sins shall be blotted out, when the Times of refreshing shall come from the Presence of the Lord,* Acts v. 19. And that *if we will be faithful to the Death, we shall receive a Crown of Life,* Rev. ii. 10. And upon this *Covenant* it is that our blessed Saviour proceeds in his *Mediation* between God and Men: For our *Baptismal Vow* is nothing else but only a *solemn* Engagement of ourselves to *perform* the *Condition* of this Covenant, upon which there results to us a *conditional* Right to all that God hath *promised* in it; and when by this *federal* Solemnity of Baptism, *God* and we have once *obliged* ourselves to *each other*, by mutual *Promises* and *Engagements*, Christ's Office, as *Mediator* between us, is to solicite on *both* sides for mutual *Performance*; and accordingly in mediating for *God* with *us*, he *requires* nothing of *us* but what we promised to *God*; and in mediating for *us* with *God*, he *claims* nothing of *God*, but what God promised to *us*. And hence he is called, *The Mediator of this better Covenant,* Heb. viii. 6. and *The Mediator of the new Covenant,* Heb. xii. 24. because he transacts between *both* Parties to solicite the *Performance* of their *mutual* Engagements: For so the same Author in *Heb.* ix. 14, 15. seems to explain it. *How much more,* saith he, (having spoken before of the Virtue of the Blood of Bulls and Goats) *shall the Blood of Christ, who thro' the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge our Consciences from dead Works, to serve the living God; and for this Cause he is the Mediator of the New Covenant, that by means of Death for the Redemption of Transgressions,* &c. *they which are called, might receive the Promise of Eternal Inheritance;* where those Words [and for this Cause] seem as well to refer to what went *before* as to what *follows*; and then the Sense will be this, *For this Cause he is the Mediator of the New Covenant,* both that he might take care *that our Consciences being purged from dead Works, we might serve the living God,* and that having redeemed us by his Death, *we might receive the Promise of eternal Inheritance.* And accordingly he proceeds in his Mediation; for in acting for *God* as his *King* or *Vicegerent*, he hath *enacted* the *Conditions* which this Covenant *requires* of us into

into the *Laws* of his *Kingdom*, and *exacts* them of us under the *fearful* Penalty of *eternal Damnation*; whereby he hath taken *effectual* Care that we ſhall either *perform* theſe *Conditions*, or undergo a Puniſhment as great as the Guilt of our Neglect and Contempt of them; and having thus tied them upon us by the *utmoſt* force of *Law*, that is, by Law eſtabliſhed on the moſt *dreadful* Penalty, he hath, ſo far as his Regal Authority extends, compelled us to the *Performance* of *our* Part of this Covenant; ſo that if we do *not* perform it, it is not to be attributed to any *Neglect* or *Omiſſion* of the Mediator, who to *oblige* us to perform it, hath moſt *faithfully* acted for *God*, even to the utmoſt Extent of that Power wherewithal he *inveſted* him. And ſo on the other hand, in acting for *us* as our *Interceſſor*, he hath taken no leſs Care to inſure *God*'s Part of this Covenant to *us*, than he did to inſure *our* Part of it to *God*: For this Covenant being granted to us by God, in *conſideration* of a *valuable Satisfaction* for our *Sins*, Chriſt hath not only *rendred* this Satisfaction to God, by *dying* for us, and thereby *purchaſed* for us a juſt *Right* and *Claim* to all the *Bleſſings* which God hath *promiſed* on his Part, if we *perform* what he *requires* on *ours*, but in the *Virtue* of this Satisfaction he alſo appears for us at the Right Hand of God, there to *plead* our *Right*, and to *prefer* our *Claim*, by exhibiting that *vocal* Blood, and thoſe importunate Wounds, with the Price of which he purchaſed and obtained it. So that now we are intitled to all the *Bleſſings* of this Covenant, not only by God's *Promiſe*, but by Chriſt's *Purchaſe* too; and to ſecure both, we have Chriſt himſelf *advocating* for us in Heaven, with the Price of that Purchaſe in his *Hand*. So effectually hath he tranſacted for us in his Mediation with God in our Behalf, that we have the higheſt Security imaginable, that if we perform *our* Part of this Covenant, God will not fail to perform *his*; ſince in ſo doing he would not only violate his own *Truth*, which he hath engaged to us by *Promiſe*, but alſo injuriouſly defraud his own Son of what he hath duly *purchaſed* for us by his *Death*, and claims upon that Purchaſe by his *Interceſſion*: For he *intercedes* for no other Bleſſings in our Behalf, but what he *purchaſed* for us, upon a Conſideration that was not only infinitely *valuable* in itſelf, but alſo freely *accepted* by his Father; and he purchaſed no other Bleſſings for us, but what are ſpecified in *this* gracious Covenant; ſo that he asks nothing for us, but what he hath a Right to obtain, nothing but what he purchaſed by his *Blood*, and is in ſtrict Juſtice *due* to his *meritorious* Sacrifice; and conſequently nothing that his Father can deny him, without doing him the moſt outragious Wrong and Injury; and therefore this we may be as confident of, as we can be of any thing in the World, that whatſoever he hath *purchaſed* for us, he will not fail to *ask*; and that whatſoever he asks, he will be ſure to *obtain*.

Thus Chriſt, by his Mediation between God and Men, hath taken the moſt effectual Care to inſure the *mutual* Performance of this everlaſting Covenant to both Parties: For to inſure *God* of our performing *our* Part, he hath bound it upon us by a Law enforced with an everlaſting Penalty; which is the ſtrongeſt Obligation he could lay upon us; and to inſure *us* of God's performing *his* Part, he duly *purchaſed* it for us by his *Death*, and in virtue of that juſt Right, he ever lives to claim it by his *Interceſſion*, which is the ſtrongeſt Obligation he could lay upon God. So that now, as God cannot fail on *his* Part, without violating his Truth and Juſtice, which would be to deſtroy his own Being, and *un-god* himſelf; ſo neither we can in *ours*, without expoſing our everlaſting Well-being, and plunging ourſelves Body and Soul together into everlaſting Wretchedneſs and Calamity. And hence, I ſuppoſe, it is that our Saviour is called *the Surety of a better Covenant*, Heb. vii. 22. or, as the Greek Word may be rendered, the *Truſtee* between both Parties, to ſee that they *mutually* perform their *ſeveral* Parts of this Covenant to each other; which Office our bleſſed Lord hath faithfully performed, in that he hath taken the utmoſt Care to oblige both *God* and *us*, mutually to make

good our several Engagements to each other: For tho he hath not undertaken for us that we shall *certainly* perform our Part, yet he hath undertaken to *oblige* us to it by the *highest* and most urgent *Reason*, which was all that he could *reasonably* undertake, for Beings that are *free* to Good and Evil; and if, notwithstanding he hath *thus* obliged us, we will be so *desperately* obstinate, as not to *comply*, he hath undertaken to *chastise* our Obstinacy with a most *dire* and *exmeplary* Vengeance.

And since he *thus* proceeds in his Mediation upon the *certain* and *stated* Terms of a *Covenant*, which he himself hath *published* and *revealed* to us, we may hereby most certainly *inform* ourselves what *he* expects from *us*, and what *we* are to expect from *him*: For now we are sure, that all *he* can expect from *us*, is, that we should faithfully perform *our* Part of this Covenant, that is, that we should *implore* the *Assistance* of God's holy *Spirit*, and diligently to *cooperate* with it, so as to *repent* and *return* from our *evil Ways*, to the sincere *Practice* of all *Christian* Piety and Virtue, and that herein we should *presevere* to *the End*; and less than *this* he cannot *admit*, without being an *unfaithful* Trustee for *God* of that blessed Covenant upon which he mediates. And now we are also sure, that all *we* expect from *him* is, that if we *implore* the *Assistance* of his *Spirit*, we shall *have* it; that if with his Assistance we *repent*, we shall be *pardoned*; and that if being pardoned we *persevere* in *well-doing*, we shall be *crowned* with *everlasting Life*; and less than *this* he cannot *obtain* for us, without being an *unfaithful* Trustee for *us*: For if he should *exact* less for God of us, or *procure* less for us of God, than that Covenant, upon which he mediates, obliges *God* and *us* to, he would be wanting in his Care *one* way or t'*other*, to see this Covenant with which he is intrusted, *duly* and *impartially* executed, and either *defraud* God or us of some part of that *Right* which it *devolves* upon us; which we have all the Assurance in the World he will never do. So that now we proceed upon *certain* Terms, and do know *infallibly* what to *trust to*; we know that our Mediator exacts of us the *whole* and *intire* Condition of the *Gospel-Covenant*; that *this* he will certainly *accept*, but that *this* he *expects* without the least *Defalcation* or *Abatement*; so that if we heartily *implore* the *Assistance* of his holy Spirit, and *cooperate* with it, we have all the Assurance in the World, that we shall be effectually *enabled* to render him that sincere *Repentance* and *Obedience* he requires; and that if we *repent*, we shall be *pardoned*; and if we *persevere* in our *Obedience*, be advanced to *everlasting Glory*. On the other side, we know infallibly *before-hand*, that if we *refuse* to *submit* to *this* Condition, or do any way *fall short* of it, instead of being our *kind* and *merciful* Advocate, our Mediator will become our *implacable* Judge, and *doom* us to a Place of *dismal* Torment, where we shall live with everlasting *Horror* and *Despair*; so that now we can no longer persevere in our *Impenitence*, without *trampling* at the same time on the *highest* Encouragements, and *charging* head-long thro' the most *amazing Danger*.

IV. That as he acts *for*, and in the *behalf* of God and Men, so he *partakes* of the *Natures* of *both*: For, that this *high* and *important* Office might be the more effectually *executed* and *performed*, the eternal *Father* thought meet to place it in the Hands of his own eternal *Son*, the Son of his natural *Generation*, to whom he *communicated* from all Eternity his own *Divine Essence* and *Nature*, and whom, in due time, he appointed to assume the *Human Nature*, into a personal *Union* with his *Divinity*; that so being *God-man* in *one* Person, he might be the better *fitted* and *accomplished* to mediate between *God* and *Men*: For in mediating *authoritatively* for *God* with *us*, he was to perform the Office of a *Divine King*, to *rule* and *govern* us, as God's *Vicegerent*, and either *reduce* us under his *Authority*, or *chastise* us for our *Rebellion* against him; which is a Sphere so *vast* and so *sublime*, as needs no less than some *Divine Intelligence*, to *inform* and *actuate* it: For to wield the *Divine Scepter* and *Government*, is a Province that requires a *Divine Knowledge* and *Power*; for the *Souls* and *Hearts* of Men are the principal *Seat* and *Subject* of the *Divine Government*,

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and therefore it is very requisite, that he who is intrusted with the Administration of it, should have a *thorow* and *perfect* Inspection of all our most secret *Thoughts*, and *Intentions*, and *Purposes*, and *Resolutions*; otherwise how is it possible he should take *Cognizance* of them, so as to *command*, and *over-rule*, and *reward*, and *punish* them? But to know the *Hearts* of Men is in Scripture always appropriated to the *Divine Omniscience*; so 1 *Kings* viii. 39. *Thou, even thou only, knowest the Hearts of the Children of Men*; and if only God's *all-searching* Eye can *penetrate* into the Hearts of Men, who but a *God* can *rule* and *govern* them? And accordingly our Saviour, upon whose Shoulders this inward and spiritual Government rests, challenges to himself this *Divine Prerogative*, which is so necessary a Qualification for it, *Rev.* ii. 23. *And all the Churches shall know*, saith he, *that I am he which searcheth the Reins and Hearts, and will give to every one of you according to his Works.* Nor is it less requisite to qualify him for this spiritual Empire, that he should be Almighty, than that he should be Omniscient; for to enable him to rule the Hearts and Souls of Men, it is necessary that he should have the Command and Disposal of all those outward Events and Accidents in which they are any way concerned, since it is by these in a great measure that their Hearts are sway'd, their Affections form'd, their Intentions and Resolutions squar'd and regulated, and in a word, their good and evil Actions rewarded and punish'd in this World; and to wield and manage, moderate and dispose such infinite Numbers of Events as concern such infinite Numbers of Men so vastly distant from one another in Place, Condition, and Temper, requires a Power that can do *whatsoever it pleases both in Heaven and Earth*, which the *Psalmist* appropriates to the *Divine Power* as its peculiar *Prerogative*, Psalm cxxxv. 6, 7. and if it be only a Divine Power that can manage and dispose all the Affairs of all Men, what can be more requisite than that he who rules and governs them, should communicate of the Divine Omnipotence? And accordingly our Saviour, upon whom this Government is devolved, assures his Disciples, that *all Power was communicated to him both in Heaven and Earth*, Mat. xxviii. 18. which, being the *Prerogative* of the *Divine Power*, seems impossible to have been communicated to any but a *Divine Person*. And therefore the Prophet *Isaiah*, speaking of the Government of Christ, tells us, that his Name *should be called Wonderful, Counseller, the mighty God*, Isa. ix. 6. where, by *Counseller* and *mighty God*, he seems to design his infinite *Knowledge* and *Power*, whereby he should be qualified for this his *Divine* Government; for so *Mighty God* doth always in the Scripture-phrase signify *Almighty God*; so in *Deut.* vii. 21. *Psal.* l. 1. *Jer.* xxxii. 18. *Heb.* i. 12. and elsewhere. By all which it is evident, that to mediate *authoritatively* for God with Men is a Province so *sublime* as that it requires no less than *Divine* Perfections in the Person that *undertakes* and *manages* it, and consequently that it is requisite he should be *God*.

Nor is it less requisite to render his Government more *awful* and *majestick*: For, tho the condition of the *Person* alters not the *Nature* of the *Authority* he is vested with, yet in the estimation of Men the same Authority is more or less venerable, according as the Quality and Condition of the *Persons* clothed with it is more or less *considerable*. Since therefore the Quality of the *Person* doth always cast a *Cloud* or *Lustre* on the *Office*, it was very requisite that he who was authorized to mediate for God with Men, which is the *highest* Office under God the *Father*, should be a Person of the highest *Rank* and *Dignity* next to God the *Father* himself; and consequently that he should be God the *Son*; and hence the Author to the *Hebrews*, Chap. i. to render his Authority more awful, takes a great deal of Pains to emblazon the Dignity of his Person, in which he gives him such Stiles and Characters, as cannot without extreme force be applied to any but a Person *Divine*; he stiles him, *The brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person*; the *Founder* of the *Earth*, and the *Maker* of the *Heavens*, and the *Upholder*

holder of all Things by the Word of his Power, Ver. 3, 10. he tells us, that he was set *far above the Angels*, and that the Father had ordered *all his Angels to worship him*, declaring him to be God in these Terms, *Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever*; and then he concludes all with this Application, *Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the Things which we have heard of him*, Chap. ii. ver. 1. which shews that, in the Apostle's sense, to mediate for God, is a Station so *sublime*, that it was very fit it *should* be supplied (as it *was*) with a Person of the *highest Dignity*, that so his *Person* might *reflect* a Majesty on his *Office*, and render it more *awful* and *venerable* in the World.

And as to accomplish him for this high Office of mediating for God with Men, it was most fit he should be *God*, so it was no less requisite he should be *Man*: For Man being naturally a *sensitive*, as well as a *rational* Creature, in this *degenerate* State of his Nature, wherein his sensitive Part is *predominant*, there are no Sorts of Objects do so vigorously *impress* and *affect* him, as those which strike immediately on his *Senses*; and hence it is, that he so greedily prefers *carnal* before *rational*, and *sensitive* before *spiritual* Goods; notwithstanding the *latter* are in themselves infinitely *greater* and more *eligible*; and that in his Conceptions of *spiritual* Objects, he is so prone to *blend* and *intermix* them with *Carnal* and *Corporeal* Phantasms, because his Mind is so *estranged* from Spiritual Objects, by its continual *intimacy* and *familiarity* with sensual ones, that it can hardly frame any *Idea* of them without *disguising* them into some *bodily* semblance. God therefore being a *spiritual* and *invisible* Essence, and upon this account far removed out of the *Ken* and *Prospect* of our Sense, our *sensual* and *depraved* Minds must either be naturally indisposed to think seriously of, and consequently to be duly affected by him, which renders us prone to *Irreligion*; or to *sophisticate* our Conceptions of him with corporeal *Images* and *Phantasms*, which renders us prone to *Idolatry*; to prevent both which, God in great Condescension to this deplorable weakness of human Minds, hath always thought meet to converse with us under some *sensible* Appearance or *visible* Symbol of his *Divine Presence*. Thus when God conducted his chosen People thro' the *Red-Sea* and *Wilderness*, he went before them in a *Pillar of Cloud by Day*, and *in a Pillar of Fire by Night*; and when afterwards he gave them his *Law*, he descended upon Mount *Sinai* in a *bright* and *glorious* Flame, overcast with *thick* and *solemn* Clouds, in which *illustrious* appearance he afterwards made his Entrance into the Tabernacle, where he made his constant abode, and from whence he frequently exhibited himself to the Peoples *Eyes* and *Senses* in a body of *visible light* and *glory*, which visible light is in holy Scripture very often called the *Glory of the Lord*. And since God in Condescension to the *weakness* of Human Minds, thought it meet to present himself to the *Senses* of Men in some *visible* appearance, there is the same reason why the Mediator should assume some *visible substance* to his *invisible Godhead*; that therein he might exhibit himself to our *sense*, and thereby at once affect our Minds with a great *love* and *dread* of his Divine Majesty, and, by vouchsafing us a *visible presence*, prevent our framing *Idols* and *false Images*, and *Representations* of him in our own Minds. Now, of all *sensible* substance, there was none so proper for this end as *Human Nature*, which is that above all others that we are most *intimately* acquainted with, and most *accustomed* to *love*, and *reverence*, and *obey*. It is true, had his design been to govern us by *Terrors* and *Affrightments*, as he did the *Jews*, it would have been more proper for him to assume that dreadful Appearance of a *consuming Fire*, in which he was wont to converse with *them*; but his design being to erect his *Empire* in Mens *Souls*, and to *captivate* their *Wills* into a *free* and *generous* Obedience, he could not have appeared to us in any visible Substance so proper for this End, so apt to *oblige* and *awe*, to *endear* and *terrify* us together, as *Human Nature*. And accordingly, as God dwelt of old in the *Jewish* Tabernacle, and thence *displayed* himself before the *Eyes* of that People in a visible Glory; so *the Word*, as St. *John* tells, *was made Flesh*,

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and tabernacled among us, (for so the *Greek* Word ἐσκήνωσεν signifies) *i. e.* as in Condescension to the Weakness of the *Jews*, he pitched his Tabernacle among them, and thence frequently *appeared* in a visible Glory to their *sense*, so in Condescension to ours, he pitched his Tabernacle in our Flesh, or Nature, from whence, as he proceeds, *we beheld his Glory, (i. e.* at his Baptism and Transfiguration) *as the Glory of the only begotten Son*, or in which the only begotten Son was wont to *display* himself from between the *Cherubims*, *John* i. 14. In short therefore, since, in mediating for God with us, it was very needful, that in compliance with our weakness he should address to our sense in some visible appearance; and since there was no visible appearance in which he could so advantageously address to us as that of *Humane Nature*; it hence evidently appears how requisite it was, that he should assume our Nature to his Deity, and be a Man as well as God.

And as it was requisite he should be *God-man* in order to his mediating for *God* with *us*, so was it also no less requisite in order to his mediating for *us* with *God*; because, as I shall shew hereafter, to mediate for us with God, implies, First, his making an *atonement* for our *Sins* with his *Blood*; Secondly, his appearing for us as our Advocate in Heaven. Now as for the first, it was highly requisite that he should be Man, that so he might *suffer* for us, his Divinity being wholly impassible; and this reason the Apostle himself assigns, Heb. ii. 14. *Forasmuch then as the Children are partakers of Flesh and Blood, he also himself* (speaking of Christ) *took part of the same, that thro' Death he might destroy him who had the power of Death*; and seeing he was to assume another Nature to his Divinity, that so he might suffer for us, it was most fit and proper that he should assume *ours* rather than any *other*. For since God in Mercy had consented to accept of *another* Person's suffering for *our* Sins, it was very requisite that what he suffer'd for us should come as near to our own personal suffering as it was possible, that so it might be more exemplary to us, and more nearly affect us with dread and horror for our Sins; and next to our own personal suffering is the suffering of our Nature; and therefore since the Punishment of our Sins was to be transferred from our Persons, it was highly fit it should be inflicted on our Nature, which it could not have been, had not he been Man who endured it.

And as it was requisite that he should be Man, that so he might suffer, and that so the Nature at least that had sinned might suffer, so it was no less requisite that he should be *God-man* in one and the same Person; to render his Sufferings a valuable Consideration for all that Punishment that was due to God upon the Score of the infinite Sins of an infinite number of Sinners. For how could the Blood of one Man, tho never so innocent or excellent, have amounted to a valuable Commutation for the forfeited Lives and Souls of a world of guilty Sinners? Or what less than the Blood of *God-man* could have been any way equivalent to that Eternal Punishment that was due to God from the whole Race of Mankind? And yet, that it should be in some measure equivalent was highly requisite, as I shall shew hereafter, both to satisfy the Divine *Justice* for what is past, and to secure the Divine Authority for the future; and accordingly we are said to be *purchased with the Blood of God*, Acts xx. 28. not that the Divine Essence can suffer or bleed, but being united into one Person with the Humane Nature, the Properties of this Nature, and also the Actions and Passions thence proceeding, may be truly attributed to it; and therefore since in the Person of Christ, God was united to Man, whatsoever his Humanity suffered may be truly called the suffering of God; and being so, it was a suffering every way equivalent to the Eternal Damnation of the whole World of Sinners.

Lastly, As he was to appear as our Advocate at the Right Hand of God, it was very fit he should be Man, that so, as the Apostle discourses, *Having*

an High Priest that was in all Points tempted like as we are, as having been placed in our Nature and Circumstances, he might be the more affectionately *touched with the feeling of our Infirmities*, Heb. iv. 15. *i. e.* that so our Nature being a part of himself, and that himself having experienced its Weakness and Infirmity, he might be the more nearly concern'd for it, and be touch'd with a more tender Compassion towards it, and consequently solicite its Cause and Interest at the Right Hand of God with greater zeal and importunity. For so the same Author reasons, *Heb.* iii. 17, 18. *Wherefore in all Things it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in Things pertaining to God, to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People; for in that himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.*

And that he should be God as well as Man, is no less requisite to create in us the greater confidence of the success of his Advocation. For what Reason or Argument could be great enough to satisfy our guilty, and therefore anxious Minds, that ever a meer Man, who had nothing beyond ourselves to recommend him to God, but only his Innocence and Virtue, should be able to obtain such a prevailing Interest in Heaven, as not only to reconcile the Almighty Father of all Things to a World of sinful Men, against whom he was justly and so highly incensed, but also to obtain of him to embrace them with infinite Love, and crown them with eternal Favours; which is such a stupendous success as we could scarce have modestly hoped for from the most importunate intercession, not only of the best Man that ever was upon Earth, but of the highest Angel in Heaven? For unless we could reasonably suppose God to be more pleased with one innocent Man or Angel than he is displeased with a World of guilty Sinners, which is hardly supposable, we could have no just ground to hope that the cries of the one's Intercessions should be more prevalent with him than the cries of the other's Guilts. But when we consider, that he who hath undertaken our Cause is the *Son of God*, the Son of his *natural Generation*, that from all Eternity was begotten of his *Essence*, *God of God*, *Light of Light*, *very God of very God*, what may we not expect from the Prayers of one so near and dear to the Eternal Father, that is fit either for him to ask, or for the Eternal Father to bestow? For this we may be confident of, that he can never be so highly *displeas'd* with Us as he is pleased with his own Son, who is the stamp of his very Essence, and express Character of his Person, and that therefore his Pleasure in him will be far more prevalent than all his Displeasure against us; and while it is so, we have all the Security in the World that he will succeed in his Advocation, and prevail in our behalf. Thus that Christ should be *God-man* was in itself highly expedient to qualify him for all the Parts and Offices of his Mediation, and accordingly the Holy Scripture expresly declares him to be so.

For first, That he is God, is as plainly asserted as any Proposition in the Bible. For thus, not to instance in the Old Testament, where he is frequently styled *Jehovah*, the incommunicable Name of God, and the Mighty or Almighty *God*, and *Immanuel*, that is, God with us; in the New Testament he is not only called God, *Acts* xx. 28. where the Pastors are exhorted *to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own Blood*, which can be applied to none but Christ; and *John* xx. 28. where *Thomas* calls him *my Lord and my God*, which Confession of his, our Saviour himself approves, *Verse* 29. but moreover he is called the *true God*, 1 John v. 20. *And we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ, he is the true God and eternal Life*, and *God over all blessed for ever*, Rom. ix. 5. and accordingly the Father himself is brought in thus bespeaking him, *Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever*, Heb. i. 8. where his design is to shew the excellency of Christ above the *Angels*; for, saith he in *Verse* 7. *Of the Angels he saith, who maketh his Angels Spirits, and his Ministers a flame of Fire; but unto the Son he saith, Thy*

Throne, O God, &c. which Stile, *O God*, here must necessarily import something greater than was ever attributed to *Angels*, and consequently something greater than a *Nominal* or *Titular Deity*; which our Adversaries in this Article allow was frequently given to the *Angel of the Lord* in the Old Testament. If therefore that Angel of the Lord were a mere created Angel, as they affirm, he had as much attributed to him as our *Saviour*, unless we suppose this Stile, *O God*, to import real and essential *Deity*, and not merely *nominal*. So also *John* i. 1. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* For the clearing of which noble Text, which our Adversaries with a world of Art have endeavoured to perplex and intangle, it is to be considered that this Phrase, ὁ λόγος, *the Word*, was a Term of Art by which in that very *Age* when this Gospel was written, and long *before* and *after* it, both the *Jewish* and Heathen Writers were wont to express and signify *a Divine Person*, (*a*) by whom the Antient *Jews* understood the *Messias*, (*b*) who is that very Person the Apostle here treats of.

Vide Note (*a*) *at the End of this* Part.
Vide Note (*b*).

Since therefore by this Phrase *the Word*, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, when St. *John* wrote this Gospel, understood a *Divine Person*; and since by this Divine Person the *Jews* understood the *Messias*, there is no reason to imagine that St. *John* here meant it in any other Signification, since in so doing he could not but foresee he should impose upon the World, and take an effectual course to make us believe he meant what he never intended. For he is so far from explaining this Phrase into any *different* Sense from that of the *Jewish* and *Gentile* Writers, that he all along explains himself in the the *very same*.

Vide Note (*c*).

Now it is hardly to be imagined by any one whose mind is not deeply tinctured with *Heretical Pravity*, but that he had the Apostle used this Technological Phrase in any *different* Sense from its common acceptation, he would have told us of it, and not have given us such an unavoidable occasion to mistake in so great a Doctrine, by clothing its Sense in such Phrases as in the Language of the Age he wrote in, signified so *differently* from what he *meant* and *intended* by them.

And as in the above-named Texts he is expresly stiled *God*, so other Texts, to convince us that he is not a mere *titular* Deity, attribute sundry Things to him which are peculiar to God *Essential*: For so the *making of the World* is in sundry Places expresly attributed to him, (which as the Apostle tells us, *Heb.* iii. 4. is peculiar to God; *For he*, saith he, *that made all Things is God*) for so in the above-named Text we are told, *That by him were all Things made, and that without him was not any thing made, which was made*, where, by *all Things*, we must necessarily understand the *whole World*, unless we will suppose the Apostle to *equivocate*; because it was then a common and received Doctrine, that *the Word* was the *Maker of the World*: For so, besides the above-cited Authorities, the *Chaldee* Paraphrase upon *Isa.* xlv. 12. instead of, *I made the Earth, and created Man upon it, saith the Lord*, renders it, *I by my Word made the Earth, and created Man upon it*; and on *Gen.* i. 27. instead of *God created Man*, the *Jerusalem Targum* renders it, *The Word of the Lord created Man*, and so in several other Places. This therefore being the Doctrine of the Age, St. *John* could not but apprehend that they would certainly understand these Words of his in their own Sense, because in all appearance they are so to be understood; if therefore he meant them in any other Sense, he ought immediately to have explained himself; which since he hath not, it is plain either that he meant according to the *common* Sense, or that he intended to *equivocate*; but, that he meant according to the common Doctrine of the Age, is sufficiently evident from other Texts of Scripture: For *Heb.* xi. 3. the Apostle expresses this Article to the *Jews* in their own Language, *thro' Faith we understand that the Worlds were framed by the Word of God.* Now that by this *Word* he meant *Christ*, is plain from *Heb.* i. 1, 2. *In these last Days God spake unto us by his own Son, by whom*

also he made the Worlds; and by these *Worlds* he means the *whole Creation*, is evident from the 8th, 9th, and 10th Verses of this Chapter, *But unto the Son, he said, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever*, &c. *Thou hast loved Righteousness, and hated Iniquity*, &c. speaking still of the *Son*; and then it follows, *And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the Foundation of the Earth, and the Heavens are the Work of thine Hands*; for the Conjunction *(And)* here plainly connects these Words to the foregoing, *viz. But unto the Son he said*, &c. so that still it is the same *Son*, of whom it is said, *Thy Throne, O God*, &c. and *thou, Lord, in the Beginning*, &c. the same Person, *whose Throne*, in Ver. 8. is said to *be for ever and ever*, that is said in Verse 10. to have *laid the Foundations of the Earth*, So also *Col.* i. 15, 16, 17. *Who is the Image of the invisible God, the First-born of every Creature, for by him were all Things created, that are in Heaven, and that are on Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers, all Things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all Things, and by him all Things do consist*; where, to shew that he means a proper and literal Creation, the Apostle describes it in those very Words, wherein *Moses* describes the Creation of the World, *For by him were all Things created that are in Heaven, and that are on Earth*; and to shew that he doth not mean by creating, *renewing*, or *regenerating*, as the *Socinians* will needs understand him, he tells us, that not only *Men* were created by him, who are the only Subjects of this new *Metaphorical* Creation, but *all Things* in general *that are on Earth*; and not only all Things that are on Earth, but *all Things that are in Heaven*, too, where there never was any thing, *new created*, or *regenerated*; for the *Thrones and Dominions, the Principalities and Powers, i. e.* Orders of Angels, that are here said to be created by him, have never been *renewed* or *regenerated*; but those of them that *fell*, fell for *all Eternity*, and they which *stand*, have *always* stood, and shall stand *for ever*; and therefore by his *creating* them, must be meant his giving them their *Being* and *Existence*.

And as the Creation of the World is in Scripture attributed to Christ, which speaks him a *Divine Being*; so there are other Things ascribed to him, which are *peculiar* to the *Divinity*, as particularly his being *Alpha* and *Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last*, in *Rev.* xxii. 13. and several other Places, which is a Style that God hath appropriated to himself, *Isa.* xliv. 6. *Thus saith the Lord, the King of* Israel, *and his Redeemer the Lord of Hosts, I am the first, and I am the last, and besides me there is no God.* If then Christ be *the first and last*, as he himself declares he is, *Rev.* i. 17. he must be that *Lord, the King and Redeemer of* Israel.

Hitherto we have been proving, that he is *God*; but then there are other Texts that do as plainly prove him to be *God-man*: For so in 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. *Without Controversy great is the Mystery of Godliness, God was manifested in the Flesh*; which is the same with that of St. *John*, John i. 18. *And the Word* (which, in the first Verse, he saith *was God) was made Flesh*; so also *Phil.* ii. 6, 7. *For being in the Form of God, he thought it not Robbery to be equal with God, but emptied himself, and took upon him the Form of a Servant, being made in the Likeness of Men*; from which Words it is plain that Christ was *in the Form of God*, before ever he was *in the Form of a Servant*; for it was by taking on him the Form of a Servant that *he emptied himself*, and his being in the Form of a Servant consisted in being *made in the Likeness of Men*; so that his being in the Form of God, doth as much imply that he was *God*, as his being in the Form of a Servant doth that he was *Man*; and since in becoming Man he *emptied* himself, it necessarily follows, that before he became so, he was *full*, and also that that Fulness of his consisted in being in the Form of God: if then he was full, by being in the Form of God, before he emptied himself into the Form of a Servant, by being made in the Likeness of Men, it is certain that he was in the Form of God, *before* he was in the Form of Man, and that his being in the Form of God, doth as much signify his being *really*

 God,

God, as his being in the Form of Men, doth his being *really* Man; but for farther Satisfaction concerning these two last cited Texts, I refer the Reader to that most learned and incomparable Treatise, Dr. *Pearson*'s Exposition of the Creed, *fol.* 121, and 127. where the Cavils of the *Socinians* are all shamefully baffled with clear and convincing Reasons.

Thus as it is highly requisite in itself, that the Mediator *should* partake of the Natures of both the Parties between whom he interposes, so we are sufficiently assured that he *doth*, by Scripture-Testimony: So that now in his Mediation for *God* with *us*, we have all the Reason in the World to dread and reverence his Authority, and also to resign up ourselves to his conduct with a *free* and *chearful* Mind: For being *God*, we are sure that he hath an *all-seeing* Eye that *inspects* our Hearts, and *pries* into the inmost Thoughts and Purposes of our Souls, and an *Almighty* Arm that can *stretch forth* itself to the remotest Distance, and *reach* us even to the bottomless Pit; and being thus exposed to the *Inspection* of an all-seeing Eye, and the *Vengeance* of an Almighty Arm, how *dare* we harbour any *Thought* or *Purpose*; any *Desire* or *Affection* with which that Eye is offended, or that Arm provoked? But then being *Man* as well as God, his Authority comes armed to us with equal *Sweetness* and *Majesty*, and is every whit as apt to affect our *Love* and *Ingenuity*, as our *Dread* and *Reverence*: For how can we refuse to *obey* him, when he commands us in our *own Nature*; a Nature which is most *intimate* and *familiar* to us, and which we are most inured to *love* and to *obey*; and above all, a Nature wherein he *bled* and *died* for us, and chearfully exposed himself to *Sorrow*, *Shame*, and *Torment*, that we might *live*, and be *happy* for ever? And so on the other hand, in his Mediation for *us* with *God*, we have all the Reason in the World *stedfastly* to rely upon his *meritorious* Sacrifice and *powerful* Intercession; for as he was *Man*, he was not only *capacitated* to suffer for us, but he *actually* suffered in *our Nature*, that very Nature wherein *we* had justly deserved to suffer for ever. So that what *he* suffered for us came as near to *our* suffering for ourselves, and consequently did as much satisfy the *Ends* of Divine Justice in exacting *Punishment* of Offenders, as it was possible for any *substituted* or *vicarious* Punishment to do: For tho our *Persons* escape, our *Nature* hath been punished in *him*. But then, being *God* as well as Man, what *he* suffered for us was not only *instead* of what *we* ought to have suffered, but *equivalent* to it: So that our *ransom* from eternal Punishment being *paid* with the Blood of one of our *own* kind, *hypostatically* united to *God*, we did as much suffer in *him*, as we *could* do without suffering in our *own Persons*; and what we suffered in him, was every way *equivalent* to what we had *deserved* to suffer in our own Persons. So that now we have all possible assurance that the Divine Justice is so far *satisfied* by what Christ hath suffered for our Sins, that if we *repent* and *forsake* them, we shall be freely *discharged* from all that infinite *Debt* of Punishment which we have justly *contracted* by them. And then again being *Man*, we may be secure that he hath a most *tender* Sympathy with the whole Mass of *Human Nature*, by what distances soever of Time or Place *divided* and *dispers'd*; and consequently that having in himself experienced its *Weaknesses* and *Temptations*, so far as was consistent with his *innocence*, he must needs be a very *concerned* and *zealous* Advocate for us with the Almighty Father. And then being *God-man*, the Son of the Almighty *Father's Essence* as well as the Son of *Man*, we may be equally secure that he cannot *fail* of being *successful* in his *Advocation*, especially when he pleads for us, as he *doth* in the *right* of his own *meritorious* Blood, by which he *purchased* our admission into the Divine *Grace* and *Favour*. So that, considering all these Things, it is evident that there could have been no Mediator between God and us every way so *fit* and *proper* to govern us *for* God, and intercede for us *with* God, none in whom both *God* and *we* could have reposed that *Trust* and *Confidence*, as a *Theanthropos*, or God-man.

V. Ano-

V. Another thing which the Scripture proposes to our belief concerning this Mediator, is, that as he partakes of the natures of both the Parties between whom he mediates; so, that he might transact *personally* with *both*, he was sent down from *Heaven* to *us*, and is returned again from *us* to *Heaven*. For, since he was appointed to mediate between God and Men, it was highly expedient that he should *personally* address to *both* Parties, that so he might more *closely* and *effectually* solicite a *mutual* Reconciliation between them; and that being personally *known* to both, they might both repose their *trust* in him with greater *confidence* and *assurance*. He was well known to the *Father*, in whose bosom he dwelt from all Eternity, to be a Person every way *fitted* to be intrusted with his *Authority*, and the Administration of his *Government*, as communicating with him in the same *Divine Essence*, and consequently *essential Dominion*; by reason of which no Person in the World could be so much *concerned* for his Father's *Authority* as *he* was; and consequently no Person could be so proper to be *intrusted* with it: and therefore when upon the first *breach* between God and Men, there arose an occasion for a *Mediator*, God could not but be infinitely *satisfied*, that there was none so *fit* to act on *his* Part or mediate for *him*, as his own Son. But then since he was neither *known* to us by *Person*, nor *allied* to us by *Nature*, as he was to his *Father*, *we* could have no such reason, as the *Father* had, to place our *trust* and *confidence* in him: and therefore, tho when he *first* undertook his Mediatorship between God and us, he *was* not *related* to us by nature as he was to the Father; yet it was upon an *agreement* between the Father and him, that he *should* hereafter assume this *relation* to us, and become the Son of *Man* as well as the Son of *God*, that he was admitted to this Office. So that tho from our *Fall* to his *Incarnation*, he was not *Man* but only *God*, yet all that Time he mediated as *God-man* between God and Men; he mediated for God, as *actually* subsisting in the *Divine* Nature; he mediated for Men as he was *infallibly* to subsist in the *Humane* Nature also. He having therefore *virtually* and *intentionally* assumed our Nature from his very first entrance on his Mediatorship, did thereupon become *equally* related to *both* Parties; but till he had *actually* assumed our Natures, and therein *manifested* himself unto us, we could not have that *knowledge* of *him*, nor of his *relation* to us, that the Father had; nor consequently that reason to repose our *trust* and *confidence* in him: and therefore, that *we* might have the same reason to confide in him in his Mediation for *us* as *God* had in his Mediation for *him*, God so ordered it, not only that he should assume our Nature, which, if he had so thought meet, he might have done, without either being *seen* of us, or *born* among us, but also that he should *so* assume it, as to be visibly *born* of Humane Kind, and *manifested* in it in the open *view* and *sight* of the World. For in the *fulness of that Time*, which was long before prefixed in the Eternal Counsel of God, the Holy Ghost by an *immediate*, *invisible*, and *miraculous* operation on the *pure* and *immaculate* Womb of a Virgin, called *Mary*, of the Lineage of *David*, enabled her, without any Congress of Man, to conceive a Child of *Humane Kind*, consisting of a *rational* Soul in a *mortal* Body, which the *Eternal Word*, or natural *Son of God*, who was before all Worlds, immediately *assumed* into a *personal Union* with himself, whereby he became *God-man*, who before was only *God*, and this without either commixing his *two* Natures into *one*, or converting *either* of them into the *other*; but under their Personal Union, preserving them still *distinct* and *separate*; which *God-man* the blessed Virgin that *conceived* him, actually *brought forth* after the natural Time of Women, and *nursed* and *educated* till he arrived to the *Age of Man*, at which Time he began Personally to *treat* with Men in his *Father's* behalf; and, in order to the *reducing* them to their bounden *Duty* and *Allegiance* to the Throne of Heaven, *revealed* his Mind and Will to them with his own Mouth, and *pressed* and *enforced* it upon them with the most *powerful* Motives that ever were urged to Mankind, and by his own

own *miraculous* Works, and most *holy* Example abundantly *demonstrated* to them, that what he revealed to be the Will of his Father, was *true* and *practicable*. Thus far in his *own Person* he mediated for his *Father* with *Men*, as I shall shew more fully hereafter.

The Consideration of which ought in all Reason and Conscience, to render his Mediation more *prevalent* with us: For when God the *Father* hath condescended so far as to send down his only Son from Heaven, on an Embassy to us, to propose to *us* Terms of Reconciliation, who had so highly *incensed* and *affronted* him; when God the *Son* hath condescended so far as to clothe himself in *our* Nature, that therein he might *endear* himself to us, and thereby *oblige* us to listen more attentively to his *gracious* Proposals, what a *stupendous* height of Obstinacy, will it be in us to *stop* our *Ears* against him, and *reject* those Terms of *Mercy* he proposes to us, by persisting in a *wilful* Rebellion? Had God sent but one of the *lowest* Angels in Heaven to us, to promise *Pardon* and *eternal Life* to us, upon Condition we would but sincerely *submit* to his Will, one would have thought a Proposal so infinitely *reasonable* in itself, and *advantageous* to us, should have been embraced by us with *Transports* and *Raptures*; but to reject it *now*, when he hath sent it to us by his own *Eternal Son*, whom all his Angels *adore*, and by his Son *incarnate* in our own Natures, is such a degree of *Obstinacy* and *Ingratitude* together, as no *Devil* was ever guilty of. Suppose that you beheld this most *glorious* Person coming down to you from the Right Hand of God, to tender you a *Pardon* and a *Crown*, upon Condition you would *submit* to his Father's Will, and denounce *everlasting Vengeance* against you, if you persist in your *Rebellion*: would you dare, by refusing to submit, to *reject* that Pardon and that Crown, and *defy* that Vengeance to his Face? One would think it were *impossible*; but yet *in effect* you do the same thing, who believe that *that* Jesus, who preached this Gospel to the World sixteen hundred Years ago, was the Son of God in Human Nature, and yet obstinately refuse to submit to its Proposals. Hence from this very Topick, that *God hath in these last Days spoken unto us by his own Son*, Heb. i. 2. the Apostle himself makes this Inference, *Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the Things which we have heard, lest at any Time we should let them slip*, Heb. ii. 1.

And now having finished his *Personal* Treaty or Mediation *with* us *for* God, he lays the Foundation of his *everlasting* Intercession *for* us *with* God before our own *Eyes*, *viz*. in the *Sacrifice* of himself for the Sins of the World. He might, if he had pleased, have suffered Death for us in the *invisible* State, and receiv'd those Tortures from the malice of *Devils*, which were inflicted on him by the malice of *devilish Men*; but that would not have given so great a *satisfaction* to our *Faith*. For, for the *Son of God* to lay down his Life for *Sinners*, is such a *stupendous* Instance of *Love*, as would have *exceeded* the *belief* of Mankind, had it not been *openly* and *visibly* transacted; and therefore he rather chose to resign up himself into the Hands of the *Jews* his *cruel* Persecutors, and by them to offer up his Life upon the Cross in the *Publick view* of the World. And now having given this *sensible* evidence to our *Faith* that he *died* for us, to satisfy us farther that his Death was *accepted* by his Father as a *full* Atonement for our Sins, he *rose again* from the dead the third Day after his Crucifixion; which was a plain evidence that his Father was fully *satisfied* with what he had *suffered* for us, because he *exacted* no more, but by his *Resurrection* actually *discharged* him from any *farther* suffering *for ever*. So that the *Resurrection* of Christ is not only an *evidence* of the *truth* of his *Religion*, under which Notion I shall discourse of it hereafter, but also of the *acceptation* of his *Sacrifice*. For so the Apostle intimates in *Rom*. viii. 33, 34. *Who then shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, i. e.* Who is there now that can presume to denounce eternal Condemnation against any good Christian, since Christ

himself

himself hath *laid down his Life* for him; *yea, rather* since he is *risen again from the dead*, and hath thereby given sufficient evidence that God hath *accepted* his *Death* as our *Ransom* from eternal Condemnation? And now having satisfied our Faith in these *two* great Points, that he *died* for our Sins, and that God hath *accepted* his Death in lieu of that eternal Punishment that was due for them, all the *farther* satisfaction we can *ask* or *need*, is, that, as he *came down* from the Father to mediate Personally *with* us *for* him, so he should *return* back again to the Father to mediate Personally *for* us *with* him, to *exhibit* and *plead* his *meritorious* Sacrifice in our behalf, and in *virtue* thereof to *solicite* our *pardon* and *acceptation* with God. And therefore to satisfy us in *this* also, after he had abode some Time upon Earth after his *Resurrection*; and satisfied his Disciples, by *frequent* Converses with them, that he was *really* risen; and, given them all *necessary* Orders for their *future* Conduct in the Propagation of his Gospel, he carried them out to *Bethany*, where after he had lifted up his Hands and blessed them, he ascended before their Eyes into Heaven, upon which it is said, *Luke* xxiv. 52. *That they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great Joy*; surely not because their dear Lord was gone from them, never in this World to be seen by them more, *that* was cause of *sorrow* rather than *joy*, to them; but because he was gone to the Right Hand of the Father, there to *intercede* in Person for them, and for ever to *exhibit* that *wounded* and *bleeding* Body of his, by which he had made *expiation* for the Sins of the World, and *purchased* the *promise* of the *Spirit*, and of *eternal Life*. Upon *this* account, indeed, they had great cause to *rejoice*, because now they knew they had a *sure* Friend in Heaven, where their main *hope* and *interest* lay, even that very Friend, who not long before had freely exposed himself to a most *shameful* and *tormenting* Death, to rescue them from *Death eternal*; and who, after such an Instance of *Love*, they could not but conclude would employ his utmost Interest with the Father in their behalf; and, in a word, who being the *only begotten* of the Father, whose precious Blood he had graciously *accepted* as a *Ransom* for the Sins of the World, could not but have an *interest* with him *infinitely* sufficient to obtain for them all the *Graces* and *Favours* that were fit either for them to ask, or for his Father to bestow. So that now, if we heartily comply with him as mediating for his *Father* with *us*, we have all the Encouragement in the World to *depend* on him as mediating for *us* with his *Father*; since he doth not mediate with him by a *second hand*, or at *a distance*, but in his *own Person*, in *that* very Person which is not only infinitely *dear* to the Father, as being his only begotten Son, but hath also infinitely merited of him by offering him his own Life at his Command, as a Sacrifice for the Sins of the World: And accordingly upon this Consideration the Apostle founds the hope of Christians; 1 *John* ii. 1, 2. *My little Children, these Things write I unto you, that ye sin not; but if any Man sin*, let him not presently give up himself as hopeless and irrecoverable, for *we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our Sins.*

VI. And Lastly, Another Thing which the Scripture proposes to our belief concerning this Mediator, is, that upon his Return from us to Heaven, there to mediate Personally for *Men* with *God*, he *substituted* the *Divine* and *Omnipresent Spirit* Personally to *promote* and *effectuate* his Mediation for *God* with *Man*. When he went up to Heaven, there to mediate for *us* with *God*, he did not thereby *abandon* his Mediation for *God* with *us*, but immediately *substituted* a certain *mighty spiritual* Being to act for him, whom he calls the *Advocate*, or, as we render it, the *Comforter*, and the *Holy Ghost*, and who was to mediate with Men in his behalf even as he mediated with them in the behalf of his *Father*, and to advocate for his Authority, as he advocated for his *Father's*: For so he tells his *Ministers*, whom he left behind him to assert and propagate his Authority in the World, *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter* or Advocate, *i. e.* to *plead* for, and *enforce* your Ministry

in *my* behalf, whose Ministers you are, *that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth,* &c. *I will not leave you comfortless,* or without an Advocate, *I will come to you,* that is, by this Spirit of Truth, who is to be *my* Vicegerent, even as I am my *Father*'s, *John* xiv. 16, 17, 18. But for the fuller Explication of this great and necessary Article, I shall, first, shew what this *Divine Spirit* is, which Christ hath substituted to mediate for God with us in his Absence. Secondly, I shall explain his *Subordination* and *Substitution* to Christ in *this* Part of his Mediation. Thirdly, I shall shew what it is that he *hath* done, and still *continues* to do, in order to the *effecting* this Mediation.

First, *What this Divine Spirit* is, which Christ hath substituted to mediate for God with us in his Absence. I answer, It is the *third Person* in the *Triune* Godhead: For that besides the *Father* and the *Son*, there is a third *Divine Person* subsisting in the Godhead, seems to have been a current Doctrine among the antient Writers, both *(d) Gentile* and *Jewish (e)*, and is more plainly and expresly asserted in holy Scripture; which third Person is known in Scripture by the Name of the *Holy Ghost*, or the *Spirit of the Lord*; for that the *Holy Ghost*, so often named in the New Testament, is the same with the *Spirit of the Lord*, so much celebrated in the Old, St. *Peter* expresly asserts, 2 *Pet.* i. 2. *For the Prophecy came not in old time by the Will of Man, but holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*; from which Words it is evident, that this *Holy Ghost*, whom St. *Peter* here mentions, is the very same with that *Holy Spirit*, or *Spirit of the Lord*, by whom, as we are told in the Old Testament, the antient Prophets were inspired, *vid. Isa.* lxiii. 11. 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 2. *Mic.* ii. 7. and abundance of other Places; and accordingly St. *Peter* applies that Prophecy of *Joel* ii. 28. *I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh*, to that miraculous Descent of the Holy Ghost on the Day of *Pentecost*, *Acts* ii. 16, 17. *But this is that*, saith he, *which was spoken by the Prophet* Joel, &c. which could not be *true*, if St. *Peter*'s *Holy Ghost* were not the same with *Joel*'s *Spirit of the Lord.* But it is most certain that the Holy Ghost, whom St. *Peter* and the New Testament so often mention, was, in the first place, a real *Person*, and not a meer *Quality*, as the *Socinians* vainly dream: For so we every where find personal Properties and Actions attributed to him. Thus he is said to speak, *Acts* xxviii. 25. and *Heb.* iii. 7. yea, and his *Speeches* are frequently *recorded*; so *Acts* x. 20. *The Spirit said unto* Peter, *Arise therefore, get thee down, and go with them, for I have sent thee*; and *Acts* xiii. 2. *The Holy Ghost said, separate me* Barnabas *and* Saul, *for the Work whereunto I have called them*; and how can we, without horrible *Force* to such plain, historical Relations, which ought to be *literal* and not *figurative*, attribute these Speeches to a meer *Virtue* or *Quality?* And elsewhere he is said to *reprove the World*, John xvi. 8. and *to search into and know the deep Things of God*, 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. and to *divide his Gifts severally to every Man as he will*, 1 Cor. xii. 11. And not only so, but such Things and Actions are attributed to him, as can in no Sense be attributed to the *Father*; which would be Nonsense, if he were only the *Virtue* or *Power* of the Father, and not a real *Person, distinct* from him. Thus the Holy Ghost is said to *come*, as *sent* from the Father, in the *Name* of Christ, *John* xiv. 26. and in *John* xvi. he is said to come, as *sent* from Christ, *ver.* 7. and when he comes, Christ promises them, *that he shall guide them into all Truth, for he shall not speak of himself*, saith he, *but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak*, ver. 13. Again, *he shall glorify me*, saith Christ, *for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you*, ver. 14. And to name no more, the Holy Ghost is said *to make Intercession for the Saints, according to the Will of God*, Rom. viii. 27. none of which Things can in any tolerable Sense be said of God the *Father.* Since therefore not only *personal* Actions, but *such* personal Actions also as cannot be attributed to the *Father*, are frequently attributed to the Holy Ghost; it hence necessarily follows, that he is not merely the *Virtue* or *Power* of the Father, but a *distinct* Prin-

Vide Note (d).
Vide Note (e).

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ciple of Action from him, that acts from and by himself, and consequently is a real *Person* or *Subsistence*.

It being evident therefore, from what hath been said, that the Spirit of the Lord in the Old Testament, is the same with the Holy Ghost in the New, and that the Holy Ghost in the New is a *real Person* distinct from the Father; it hence follows in the second Place, that this Holy Ghost is a *Divine* Person, because in the Scripture-Forms of *Baptism* and *Benediction*, he is always ranked with *Divine Persons, viz.* the Father and the Son; thus Baptism is *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, Matth. xxviii. 19. And, *the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all*, is the usual Form of Benediction, 2 *Cor.* xiii. 14. Now that the *Father* is a *Divine* Person, *all* acknowledge, and that the *Son* is so *too*, hath been proved at large; and therefore since the Holy Ghost is ranked with the Father and the Son, both in our Baptismal Dedication and Form of Benediction, that is a sufficient Evidence that *he* is a *Divine* Person also: For what likelihood is there, that in such *solemn* Acts of Religion, a meer *Creature* should be taken into *Copartnership* with the *Divine Father* and *Son*? But besides, both in the Old and New Testament, divine *Actions* and *Perfections* are attributed to him. Thus in *Job* xxxiii. 4. Creation is attributed to him. *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the Breath of the Almighty hath given me Life.* So also *Job* xxvi. 13. *By his Spirit he hath garnished the Heavens.* Since therefore to *create* is a *divine* Act, and since every Act flows from the *Essence* of the *Agent*; it follows that the Essence of this Spirit, from which this divine Act of Creation flows, is *Divine*. Again, in *Psal.* cxxxix. 7. *Omnipresence* is attributed to this divine Spirit, *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?* And if there be no Place whither we can go from him, as the Question plainly implies there is not, then he must necessarily fill all Places, and be Omnipresent. So again, 1 *Cor.* ii. 10. *Omniscience* is attributed to him, *for the Spirit searcheth all Things, yea, the deep Things of God*; and that by searching here is not meant *Inquiry*, but *Knowledge* and *Comprehension*, the next Verse will inform us, *For what Man knows the Things of a Man, save the Spirit of a Man which is in him? Even so the Things of God knoweth no Man, save the Spirit of God.* If then the Spirit's *Search* be *Knowledge*, and his Knowledge comprehends *all Things*, what else is this but *Omniscience*? And as the *Actions* and *Attributes*, which the Scripture attributes to the Holy Ghost are *Divine*, so are the *Honours* also: For so 1 *Cor.* vi. 19. our Bodies are said to be *the Temples of the Holy Ghost which is in us*; now since there is nothing can make a *Temple*, which as *such* is the *House of God*, but only the Inhabitation of a *Divine Person*, and since no Person can have right to the *Honour* of a Temple, which, as *such*, is made for *divine Worship*, but he to whom divine Worship is *due*; it will hence necessarily follow, both that the Holy Ghost is a *divine Person*, and that he hath right to *divine Worship*; and accordingly, 1 *Cor.* iii. 16. the Apostle makes the *Inhabitation* of God's Spirit in us to be that which constitutes us *Temples of God*; but how could his Spirit's dwelling in us, constitute us Temples of God, unless he himself were *God*?

Besides all which he is in express Words affirmed to be God: So in 2 *Cor.* iii. 15, 16, 17. *Even unto this Day, when* Moses *is read, the Veil is upon their Hearts; nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the Veil shall be taken away; now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty*; in which Words the Apostle, as all agree, refers to *Exod.* xxxiv. 34. *When* Moses *went in before the Lord to speak with him, he took the Veil off until he came out*; from whence I argue, that that Lord whom *Moses* went in to speak with was *Jehovah*, the *true God*; this *Jehovah*, the Apostle tells us, *is that Spirit*; this Spirit he also tells us is the *Spirit of the Lord*, or the Holy Ghost, therefore the Holy Ghost is *Jehovah*, the true God. So also *Acts* v. 3, 4. *Why hath Satan filled thy Heart to lye unto the Holy Ghost*, &c. *Thou hast not lyed unto Men, but unto God, i. e.* in Lying to the *Holy Ghost*, who is *God*; for if he were

not *God*, as we are sure he is not *Man*, it might as well have been said, thou hast not lyed unto *Men* only, no, nor to the *Holy Ghost* only, but unto *God*; and indeed it ought to be so expressed, supposing that, by the *Holy Ghost* and *God*, he did not mean the *same* thing; because the Design of the Words was to aggravate *Ananias*'s Crime, from the Consideration of the Greatness of the *Person* against whom it was committed; and therefore, had the *Holy Ghost* been any thing less than God, as we are sure the *Apostles* were, to whom the Lye was immediately told, he ought to have pursued the Gradation as well to the *Holy Ghost* as to *Men*; and then it must have been, it was not *merely* to Men that thou didst lye, no, nor to the Holy Ghost *merely*, but to God himself; since therefore he places the *Aggravation* of his lying to the Holy Ghost in *this* only, that he lied not unto *Men* but unto *God*, it is plain, that by the Holy Ghost and God, he meant the same thing. From all which Testimonies it is very apparent, that this great *Spirit* or *Holy Ghost*, whom Christ hath substituted to carry on his Mediation for God with Men in his Absence, is no other than the *third divine Person* subsisting in the *eternal Godhead*. And indeed, considering the *mighty* Part he was to act, *viz.* to mediate *under* Christ for God with Men, the same Reasons which rendered it necessary for Christ to be God, to qualify him for this Office, *vide* Page 534. do render it altogether as necessary for the *Holy Ghost* to be so. And indeed how is it possible he should operate upon so many Men together, at such remote Distances, as he is obliged to do by his Office, and at once move every Member of that vast Body of Christ, the *Catholick Church*, dispers'd over the Face of the whole Earth, unless like an *Omnipresent Soul*, he be *diffused* thro' the *whole*, and *coexists* with *every Part*; and if he be *Omnipresent*, he must be *God*.

And now having given an Account of the *Person* and *Quality* of this *Divine Spirit*, I proceed,

Secondly, To explain his *Subordination* and *Substitution* to Christ, in this part of his Mediatorship for God with Men. In order to which, it is to be considered, that this *Subordination* of the sacred Persons in the Holy Trinity, proceeds not from any *Inequality* of *Essence*, but from the Inequality of their *personal Properties*: For, as to their Essence, they are all of them *God*, i. e. *infinite* in *Being* and *Perfections*; and being infinite, they must all be equal, there being no such thing as *more* or *less* in Infinity; and then being equal in *Essence*, they must necessarily be equal in essential *Power* and *Dominion*; and consequently, as such, are no way subject or subordinate to one another: but, as to their *personal Properties*, it cannot be denied but they are *unequal*; for the *Father* who *begot*, must in that respect be superior to the Son, who was *begotten*; and the Holy Ghost who *proceeded*, must in that respect be *inferior* to the *Father* and *Son*, from whom he proceeded; and upon this Inequality their Subordination is founded: For as there is a stated Number in the Trinity, by which the sacred Persons are determined to Three, so there is also a stated *Order*, by which they are ranked into a *First*, a *Second*, and a *Third*; which Order is not made by mutual Consent or arbitrary Constitution, but founded in the Nature of those *personal Properties*, by which they are distinguished from one another: For as the *Father*, being the *Fountain* of Godhead to the *Son*, must be *first* in order of Nature; and as the *Son* together with the *Father* was the *Fountain* of Godhead to the *Holy Ghost*, and therefore must be *second* to the Father, and in order of Nature *before* the Holy Ghost; so the Holy Ghost *proceeding* from the *Father* and the *Son*, must of the Three be in order of Nature the *Third*: For so the Scripture expresly asserts, that he *proceeded from the Father*, John xv. 26. and also that he is *the Spirit of the Son*, *Gal.* iv. 6. and the *Spirit of Christ*, Rom, viii. 9. and the *Spirit of Jesus Christ*, *Phil.* i. 19. And being the Spirit both of the *Father* and the *Son*, he must be supposed to proceed from *both*. And where-ever the Holy Ghost is in the Old Testament called *the Spirit of God*, it is in the Hebrew *Ruach Elohim* in

the *Plural*, which seems to intimate that he proceeded not from *one*, but from *two* divine Persons, *i. e.* not from the Father *alone*, but from the Son *also*. So that tho, as to their *Godhead*, they are all *equal*, yet in order of *Nature*, and in respect of their *personal Properties*, the third is *inferior*, the second *superior*, and the first *supreme*; and being *unequal* in those personal Properties, by which they stand related to each other, it is very reasonable that, according to these their personal *Inequalities*, they should be *subordinate* to one another; and consequently that the *Father*, who is the *Fountain* of the *Divinity*, should be *supreme* in the Divine Monarchy; and that the *Son*, who was *begotten* of him, should minister to him; and that the *Holy Ghost*, who proceeded from the Father and the Son, should minister to *both*. And accordingly in all its *external* Actions and Administrations, *this* hath ever been the *Oeconomy* of the *Holy Trinity*, for the *Father* to act by the Ministry of the *Son*, and the *Son* by the Ministry of the *Holy Ghost*: For so, before the *Fall* of Man, and consequently, before this *Mediation* of the Son commenced, it is evident, that even in *creating* the World, the *Father* acted by the *Son*, and therefore is said to have made the World by him, *Heb.* i. 2. and the *Son* acted by the *Spirit*, who is said to have moved upon the Face of the *Chaos*, Gen. i. 2. For that by the *Spirit of God* there is meant the *third Person* in the Holy Trinity, we have reason to believe, because he is elsewhere said to have made Man, and to have garnished the Heavens, as hath been already shewn. And in the same Method of *Subordination* the Godhead hath always proceeded in its Transactions with the World, and that more *especially* and *remarkably* in this great Affair of *mediating* with Mankind; wherein the *Father* hath always used the Ministry of the *Son*, and the *Son* the Ministry of the *Holy Ghost*. But in the Matter of the *Mediation*, it is evident, that this *Subordination* of these sacred Persons was founded not only in these their *personal Inequalities*, but also in a mutual *Agreement* between them, in which the Son *agreed* with the Father, that, in case he would be so far *reconciled* to Rebellious Mankind, as to grant them a *Covenant* of *Mercy*, and therein, among *other* Blessings, to promise them his *Holy Spirit*, he himself would assume *our* Natures, and therein not only *treat* with us *personally*, in order to the *reducing* us to our bounden Allegiance, but also die a *Sacrifice* for our Sins; upon which Agreement, the Father, long before the Son had *actually* performed his Part of it, even from our first *Apostasy*, granted his *Spirit* to Mankind, which Spirit was granted to *this* end, that under the Son he should mediate with *Men*, in order to the reducing them to their due *Subjection* to the Father: For all that heavenly *Influence*, which the Holy Ghost *sheds* forth upon the Minds of Men, is wholly *Mediatorial* in God's behalf, and in order to the *reconciling* Mens Minds to him; and therefore in this his Mediation, he must be supposed to act in *Subordination* to the *Son*, who is *supreme* Mediator; and accordingly, as the Son *hath* been, and *will* be always mediating with Men by *this* blessed Spirit, even from his *Ascension* to the *End of the World*, so I make no doubt but he always mediated with them by the *same* Spirit, even from the *Fall* of Man to his *Incarnation*: For so in the Time of the Old World, we read of the *Spirit's striving with Men*, *i. e.* in order to the subduing their stubborn Wills to a due *Subjection* to the Will of the Father, *Gen.* vi. 3. In doing of which, he even *then* mediated for God with Men, under the *Great* Mediator, and so he hath *continued* to do thro' all *successive* Ages of the World: For there is nothing more apparent from Scripture, than that it is *under* Christ, that the *Spirit* acts in the Kingdom of God, upon which account he is called *the Spirit of Christ*, 1 Pet. i. 11. even as by the antient *Jews* he is called the *Spirit of the Messias*, as was observed before; and this Spirit, whom St. *Peter* calls the Spirit of Christ, was, as he himself there tells us, the Spirit which was in the antient Prophets; by which it is evident, that long *before* Christ came, this Spirit was *his*, and that he acted by him. And even when he came down into the World to transact *personally* with Men, he *generally* acted by this Holy Spirit:

For so at his *Baptism* we are told, that *the Holy Ghost descended on him in a bodily shape*, Luke iii. 22. upon which it is said, that he went away *full of the Holy Ghost*, Luke iv. 1. after which it is plain, that it was *by this* Holy Ghost in him, that he *prophesied* and wrought his *Miracles*; for so *Isa.* lxi. 1. the Prophet attributes the whole Prophecy of Christ to *the Spirit of the Lord which was upon him*; and in *Mat.* xii. 28. our Saviour himself affirms, that *he cast out Devils by the Spirit of God*, and therefore he calls the *Jews* attributing his miraculous Works to the Devil, *blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*, Mat. xii. 31. because it was by the Power of the Holy Ghost that he wrought them. Now as the *Father*'s acting by the *Son* implies the Son's *Subordination* to *him*; so the *Son*'s acting by the *Spirit*, implies the Spirit's *Subordination* to *him*; which Subordination of the Spirit in his *Mediatorial Office* is immediately founded in that *Compact* of the Son with the Father, upon which he undertook the Mediation. For the Spirit was a *part* of the *Purchase* of the Son's Blood, and whatsoever he purchased, he purchased of the Father by *compact* and *agreement* with him; so that now he hath a *right* to the Spirit's *Ministry*, not only by virtue of his *proceeding* from *him*, together with the *Father*, but also by the *purchase* of his own-Blood, whereby he obtained the *promise* of him from the Father. For so the Holy Ghost is said to be *shed on us abundantly thro' Jesus Christ our Saviour*, *i. e.* thro' the *Intercession* he makes in *virtue* of his *meritorious Sacrifice*, Tit. iii. 5, 6. For whatsoever comes to us from God *thro'* Christ, is part of what he hath *purchased* for us; and in *Rom.* v. 5, 6. he makes *Christ's dying for the ungodly*, the reason of the giving the Holy Ghost to us. The *promise* of the Holy Ghost therefore, being part of the *Purchase* of Christ's Blood, he, by his *Advocation* in Heaven, obtained the *performance* of it of the Father, even as he doth the performance of all his *other* Promises. For the Father being the *supreme* Person in the Holy Trinity, is the *prime* and *original* Fountain of all our Blessings, and every good thing we receive is derived from *him* to us *thro'* the Son, and *by* the Holy Ghost; and even the Holy Ghost *himself* is derived to us *from* the Father *thro'* the Advocation of the Son. For so he himself tells us, *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter*, namely, the Holy Ghost, *John* xiv. 16. So that tho Christ hath purchased the *Holy Ghost* of the Father, as he hath also all the *other* Blessings of the *New Covenant*, yet it is plain this Purchase *vests* him not with a *right* to *bestow* and *send* him *without* the Father, but only to *obtain* him, *of* the Father, upon his *Prayer* or *Advocation*; and so of all those other Blessings. So that still the Father is the *supreme* Source from whence the Spirit and all those Blessings are *derived* to us; and it is from *his* Hands that the Son procures them by his powerful *Intercession*; in short therefore, Christ by his Death purchased a *right* of the Father to *obtain* of him, by his *Intercession*, Authority to send the Holy Ghost to minister *for* and *under* him, in his Mediation for God with Men; and accordingly he promises his Disciples that when he departed this World, he would send the *Comforter* to them, *John*. xvi. 7. where he uses the very same Phrase as he did when he commissioned his Apostles to minister under him, *As the Father hath sent me, so send I you*, John xx. 21. and accordingly his *sending* the Comforter must denote his *Commissioning* Him by the Authority he had *received* from the Father to minister under him in his Mediation for the Father. For so in *John* xv. 26. *When the Comforter is come, whom I will send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:* Where first, the Son is said to *commission* or *send* him; Secondly, to commission or send him *from* the Father, *i. e.* by Authority from him; and Thirdly, to commission or send him to *testify* of him, and therein to *minister* to him; and so in *Luke* xxiv. 49. when he was just ascending into Heaven, he tells his Disciples, *Behold I send the Promise of my Father upon you*, *i. e.* the Promise of the *Holy Ghost*; and accordingly *Acts* ii. 33. St. *Peter* tells us, upon that miraculous descent of the Holy Ghost, that Christ *being exalted to the right hand of* God,

God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, (*i. e.* having by his *Intercession* received *Authority* of the Father to *send* the Holy Ghost, according to that Promise which he had before *purchased* of him with his Blood) *he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear, i. e.* this *miraculous* Gift of the Holy Ghost. In all which Places it is evident, that the Holy Ghost was *substituted, commissioned,* and *sent* by the Son, *authorized* thereunto by the Father, to minister *under* him. For as the Son acts *by* the Father's Authority; as he is *his* Minister, so all that Authority which he *communicates* to others to act *under* him, he must derive originally *from* the Father, and consequently that Authority by which he *sent* the Spirit to act as *his* Minister, he must have deriv'd from the Father, whose Minister *himself* is; and hence the Father is said *to send the Spirit in the name of the Son*, that is, to appoint the Spirit to act *under* the Son, and by *his* authority, *John* xiv. 26. as the Son is said *to send the Spirit from the Father, i. e.* by the authority which he had received *of* the Father; and this, I verily believe, is the reason why the Apostle in *Eph.* iv. 8. quotes the Psalmist with that variation, *he ascended up on high*, saith he, speaking of Christ, *he led Captivity Captive, he gave Gifts unto Men*, whereas the Words of the Psalmist are, *He received Gifts for Men*, Psal. lxviii. 18. to denote that that Gift of the Holy Ghost which Christ *gave* to his Church, was nothing but what he himself had first *received* from the Father: so that tho it was from the *Father* that the Son had his *Authority* to send the Holy Ghost; yet it was from the *Son* that the Holy Ghost had his *Mission immediately*. And accordingly you may observe, that after Christ's departure from this World, the Holy Ghost acted *immediately* under Christ, as the *supreme Vicegerent* of his Kingdom. For *next* and *immediately* under Christ he authorized the Bishops and Governors of the Church, and *constituted them Overseers of the Flock of Christ*, Acts xx. 28. It was *he* that chose their *Persons*, and appointed them their *Work*, Acts xiii. 2. and gave them their several *Orders* and *Directions*, Acts xv. 28. and xvi. 6. in all which it is evident he acted *under* Christ, and still continues to act as his *supreme Substitute* and *Vicegerent*; and accordingly he is stiled by *Tertullian, the Vicarious Virtue or Power*, as he was the supreme *Vicar* and *Substitute* of Christ in mediating for God with Men; so that now the Holy Ghost is *subordinate* to the Son, not only by virtue of his *Procession* from *him* together with the *Father*, but also by virtue of his being *purchased* and *obtained* by him *of* the Father by his meritorious *Death* and *Intercession*. I proceed,

III. To shew *what* it is that this Holy Spirit *hath* done, and still *continues* doing in order to the *effectuating* this his Mediation. For there are some Things which he *hath* done, and now *ceases* to do, and some Things which he hath *always* done, and will *still* continue doing to the end of the World; of *both* which I shall give some brief account in order to the fuller explication of the Ministry of the Holy Ghost, under Jesus the great Mediator. First therefore, there are some Things which he *hath* done, and now *ceases* to do, and of this sort were those *extraordinary* Operations he performed in order to the *Planting* and *Propagating* Christ's Gospel in the World, *upon* and *after* that his Miraculous Descent, of which we read in *Acts* ii. For when Christ was departing from his Disciples into Heaven, he ordered them *to stay at Jerusalem*, and not to undertake that mighty work of *Planting* his Gospel thro' the World, *till they were endued with Power from on High*, Luke xxiv. 49. which Power from on High was no other than that *miraculous* Assistance which upon his *Descent* the Holy Ghost did afterwards vouchsafe them; upon which Order they return to *Jerusalem*, and there continue till the Day of *Pentecost*, *Fasting* and *Praying* together in an upper Room; when all on a sudden the Holy Ghost *descended* upon them in a *visible* Body of bright shining Fire, and *endowed* them with all those *Heavenly* Powers which were requisite to *qualify* them for the *Propagation* of Christ's Gospel thro'

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the World. For as they were to be the first Planters of the Gospel, it was requisite, First, that they should be able to *speak* the several *Languages* of those Nations to whom they were to preach; Secondly, that they should be *fully* and *clearly* instructed in the Doctrines which they were to preach; Thirdly, that they should be able to give the most *convincing* evidence of the *truth* and *divinity* of their Doctrines; Fourthly, that they should be conducted by *Infallible* Advice thro' all the *emergent* Difficulties of their Ministry; against all which Necessities the Holy Ghost abundantly supplied *them*: For,

First, He *inspired* them with the *Gift* of *Languages*, without which they must have spent a *great* Part of their Lives, before they could have been capable of preaching the Gospel to the World, in *learning* the several Languages of the several *Nations* they were to preach to; which must have very much *retarded* the *Progress* of the Gospel. And therefore the Holy Ghost upon this his miraculous *Descent*, did in an *instant* infuse into them the *Habit* of speaking *several* Languages; insomuch that all of a *sudden*, and without any *Rules* of *Grammar* or previous *Instructions*, they were heard to *speak*, to the great *Astonishment* of their Auditors, in the fifteen several *Tongues* of fifteen several *Nations*, Acts ii. 4. &c. And tho they were immediately *dispersed* abroad in the World, and some of them into *remote* Countries, whose Names perhaps they had never heard of, yet still, where-ever they came, they were *inspired* with the *Language* of the *Country*, which they spake as *freely* as their own *Mother-Tongue*. And this was a vast advantage to them in their Ministry, because they were not only *enabled* by it to preach the Gospel to all Nations, but were enabled in *such* a manner, as gave a mighty *confirmation* to their *Doctrine*. For their very *Gift* of *speaking*, being a *miraculous* effect of Divine Power, was an *undeniable* Demonstration that what they spake was *Divine*.

Secondly, The Holy Ghost *fully* and *clearly* instructed them in the *Doctrines* which they were to preach; and this was no more than what was necessary. For what they preached, who were the first *Planters* of the Gospel, was to be the Standard of *Truth* and *Falshood* to all succeeding Generations, and therefore it was highly necessary, that they should be fully and clearly *instructed* in the Doctrine of the Gospel, that so their *Successors* in all Ages, might safely rely on their Authority. But whilst they were under the *Personal* Discipline of our Saviour, who instructed them by *Human* Methods, *i. e.* by *proposing* his Doctrine to their *Ears*, and thro' their Mediation to their *Understandings*, it is plain they made but very *slow* and *slender* Improvements. For after all his Pains with them, they continued very *ignorant* of some of the most *material* Articles of Faith, and at best they had but *gross* Apprehensions of the nature of *Christ's Kingdom*, and of the *Ends* and *Reasons* of his Death, and were very *diffident* even of his *Resurrection*; and the Reason was, that *Christ* taught them as a *Man* doth a *Man*, *i. e.* by *Words*, which are only the audible *Images* and *Representations* of Things, which being liable to *misapprehension* and *oblivion*, some of them they *utterly* forgot, and some of them they *grosly* misunderstood. But when the *Spirit* came upon them, a wondrous *Light* broke all of a sudden into their *Understandings*, by which they *discovered* farther into the Gospel-*Mysteries* in *an instant*, than they had done under *all* our Saviour's teaching. For, tho the Spirit taught them no *new* Doctrines, but did only *repeat* and *explain* to them what our Saviour had taught them before, (*for he shall receive of mine*, saith Christ, *i. e.* of my Doctrine, *and shall shew*, or explain *it unto you*) yet it is evident, he taught them much more *effectually* than our *Saviour*. For he spake not to their *Ears*, but to their *Minds*, and represented Things more *nakedly* and *immediately* to their Understandings; he *conversed* with their *Spirits*, even as *Spirits* do with *Spirits*, without involving his *sense* in *articulate* sounds, or *material* Representations, but *objected* it to them in its own *naked* light, and *cha-*

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racterized it *immediately* on their Underſtandings. And as he immediately propoſed the Divine Light to their Minds, ſo he alſo *illuminated* their Minds to *diſcern* and *comprehend* it; he *raiſed* and *exalted* their intellectual Faculties, and, as a *vital form* to the light of their Reaſon, did *actuate*, and thereby *enable* it to comprehend his Revelations. And hence, *Acts* xix. 6. we are told, that the Diſciples, who upon St. *Paul's* laying his Hands on them, received the Holy Ghoſt, ſpake with Tongues, and *propheſied*, i. e. *explained* the deep Myſteries of the Goſpel; for ſo *Propheſying* in the New Teſtament doth moſt commonly ſignify; hence 1 *Cor.* xiii. 2. the Apoſtle makes *Prophecy* to conſiſt in *underſtanding* Divine *Myſteries* and *Knowledge*; and in ver. 9. *We know in part*, ſaith he, *and we propheſy in part*; ſo that the effect of their receiving the Holy Ghoſt, you ſee, was *Prophecy*, that is, a clear *underſtanding* of, and *ability* to *explain* the Myſteries of Religion. A plain Evidence how effectually he taught them, in that they no ſooner became his *Scholars*, but they were fit to be the *Teachers* of the World. For, tho it ſeems probable that *he* as well as *our Saviour* inſtructed them *gradually* in the knowledge of the Goſpel, ſince it was ſome time *after* this firſt Deſcent that the Myſtery of the *calling of the Gentiles* was revealed to them, yet it is very apparent that he inſtructed them much *faſter* than our Saviour had done, and much *fuller*; and that thoſe *Impreſſions* of Divine Truth, which he made upon their Underſtandings, were much more *vigorous* and *clear*, and therefore could not be ſo eaſily either forgotten or miſtaken by them. And accordingly our Saviour himſelf tells them, that *he had many Things to ſay unto them, but they could not bear them*; ſuch was the narrowneſs of their Capacity, and the way of *his* teaching: *Howbeit*, ſaith he, *when the Spirit of Truth is come, he ſhall lead you into all Truth*, John xvi. 12, 13. *and teach you all Things*, John xiv. 20. Thus the Holy Ghoſt fully inſtructed them what Doctrines they were to preach to the World, and by his immediate Inſpirations enabled them to deliver down the Truth to us, the *whole* Truth, and nothing *but* the Truth.

Thirdly, The Holy Ghoſt enabled them to give the moſt *convincing* Evidence of the *Truth* and *Divinity* of their Doctrines; without which it was impoſſible they ſhould ever have *ſucceeded* in their Miniſtry. But the only *certain* Evidence they could give that their Doctrine was *Divine*, was the Teſtimony of *Miracles*. For there is nothing which *pretends* to be Divine, can any otherwiſe *evidence* itſelf to *be ſo*, but by ſomething that is *apparently* Divine; and there being nothing apparently Divine, but what is *plainly* and *evidently* a *miraculous* effect of *Divine Power*, it follows that Miracles *only* can atteſt the *Divinity* of any *Doctrines*. Wherefore, to enable the firſt Planters of the Goſpel, to convince the World that their *Doctrine* was *Divine*, it was highly requiſite that they ſhould be endowed with this *Divine Power* of working *Miracles*; and accordingly ſo they were upon this miraculous Deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt upon them: For ſo *Acts* ii. 43. upon this coming of the Holy Ghoſt on them, we are told that *many Wonders and Signs were done by the Apoſtles*; ſo alſo *Acts* iv. 30, 31. that upon their Praying that God would *ſtretch forth his Hand to heal, and that Signs and Wonders might be done by the name of Jeſus*; God, in anſwer to their Prayer, *filled them with the Holy Ghoſt*, that is, enabled them by *his Spirit* to effect the *Signs* and *Wonders* they had prayed for. It is true indeed, they had in *ſome meaſure* the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt *before* this miraculous Deſcent, even while our Saviour was among them, but that was very *ſparingly*, and only upon ſome particular *Occaſions*, and for the effecting ſome particular *Miracles*; but our Saviour promiſed them, that upon his going to the Father, to ſend the Comforter to them, *They who believed on him, ſhould not only do the Works which he did, but greater works than thoſe*, John xiv. 12. and accordingly when after his *Aſcenſion* the Holy Ghoſt came upon them, he *continued* with them, and upon *all* Occaſions impowered them to do *all* Kinds of Miracles, for the Confirmation of their Doctrine; ſo that whereas, before the greateſt part of theſe *miraculous* Signs of

of the *Divinity* of the *Christian Doctrine* were performed by Christ himself in his *own Person*, and by that means confined to the Place of his *Personal* Habitation; which was too *narrow* a Theatre for many Spectators to behold them; the Holy Ghost, by working Miracles in *his* Name of *all* Sorts, and upon *all* Occasions *in* and *by* his Ministers, who were presently to be *dispersed* over the face of the whole Earth, did much more *amply* display his Divine Power, and with greater *speed* spread the Renown of it thro' the World, and by constantly impowering of *many* Persons, in *many* Parts of the World, to perform so *many* miraculous Things in *Christ*'s Name, did as it were carry him in open *Triumph* thro' the World, and at once display his *Majesty* and *Power*, over the face of the whole Earth. For what Christ did in his *own Person* while he was on Earth, *that* and *much more*, the Holy Ghost did in the Persons of all his *Ministers*; and the Holy Ghost did that at the *same Time* in a *thousand* Parts of the World, which Christ did in *one*; and by these *miraculous* Effects, which are therefore called *the Evidence and Demonstration of the Spirit*, 1 Cor. ii. 4. the Holy Ghost asserted to the World the *Truth* and *Divinity* of those Doctrines which the *Ministers* of Jesus taught: for this Gift of Miracles *expired* not with those *Primitive* Ministers, but was continued down to their *Successors* for several Generations together, until the Christian Doctrine was *propagated* thro' the World; and then, when it had done its *Work*, and accomplished its *End*, it was *withdrawn*, as being no longer *necessary*.

Fourthly and Lastly, The Holy Ghost conducted them by his own *infallible* Advice, thro' all the *emergent* Difficulties of their *Ministry*: For the Work wherein they were engaged, was attended with *Difficulties* that were utterly *insuperable* to Human *Wisdom* and *Power*: For, first, their Work being such as required an *invincible* Courage and *firm* Integrity of Mind, a *watchful* Prudence and *spotless* Purity of Manners, it was highly needful, especially *at first* (a good *Beginning* being of vast *Importance* to all great *Undertakings*) that they should be *infallibly* directed what *Persons* were fit to be *ordained* to it, and *which* of those were most *fit* and *proper* for the several *Countries* and *Provinces* of the World; and then thro' the whole Course of their Ministry they were fain to *contend* with all the united *Wit* and *Malice* of the World; and were very often sent to preach among *strange* Nations, whose *Tempers* and *Manners* they understood not; and still where-ever they came, they had *Spies* upon them to *watch* their Designs, and *observe* their Actions, and ever and anon they were *accused* and *impleaded* by *subtle* and *insinuating* Orators before the *Tribunals* of their Enemies, and there forced to answer for themselves. Besides that they, being to *convert* both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, between whom there was an *inveterate* Aversion, and to *unite* them together into *one* Communion, it could not be otherwise expected, but that great *Dissensions* should arise among their *own* Converts, as accordingly it happened; which if not managed with infinite *Prudence*, must needs give a great *Disturbance* to them, and *interrupt* the Course, and *hinder* the Success of their Ministry. And in such *difficult* Circumstances, it was almost impossible for them not to *miscarry*, without being conducted by an infallible *Prudence* and *Circumspection*; under all which *Exigences* the Holy Ghost served the Primitive Church in the same Capacity as the *Urim* and *Thummim* did the antient *Jews*, *i. e.* as an *Oracle* to *advise* them in all Cases of *Difficulty*, and *direct* them in the Management of all their *great* and *weighty* Affairs. Thus in that difficult Case, which of the Apostles should be sent forth to the *Gentiles*, the Holy Ghost either by a *Bath-Col*, *i. e.* Voice from Heaven, or an immediate *Inspiration*, thus directs them, *Separate me* Paul *and* Barnabas, *for the Work whereunto I have called them*, Acts xiii. 2. and when they went forth among the Gentiles, the Holy Ghost advises them where they *should* preach, and where *not*, *Acts* xvi. 6. and so also in the choice of their Bishops, they had always the *Direction* of the Holy Ghost; so in *Acts* xx. 28. it is said, that it was the *Holy Ghost that set them over the Flock*; and St. *Paul* tells *Timothy that* the χάρισμα, or *Episcopal Office*, wherewith

he was invested, was given him *by Prophecy*, *i. e.* by the *immediate* Direction of the Holy Ghost; and St. *Clemens*, who was a Disciple of the Apostles, tells us, that in those Times they ordained Bishops, πνεύματι δοκιμάζοντες, *discerning* by the *Spirit*, who should be ordained; and again, that they did it, πρόγνωσιν εἰληφότες τελείαν, having a perfect *Fore-knowledge* who they should choose. And thus also for composing the Differences which arose between their *Jewish* and *Gentile* Converts, they had the *immediate* Advice of the Holy Ghost, who directed them to that *wise* Expedient, *Acts* xv. 28. by which the *Peace* of the *Church* was secured for the *present*, and *afterwards* maintained in despite of all the Attempts of *seditious* Incendiaries to *break* and *divide* it. And thus having *recourse* upon all Occasions to this *infallible* Guide, they were never at a *loss* either *what* to say, or *how* to behave themselves; the Holy Ghost *making good* to them what our Saviour had *promised* them, *When they bring you before Magistrates, take no thought what ye shall answer, for the Holy Ghost shall teach you at the same Hour what ye ought to say*, Luke xii. 11, 12.

These are the extraordinary Things which the Holy Ghost acted *for* and *under* Christ, in order to the *planting* and *propagating* his Gospel thro' the World, and which he *continued* to act so long as it was *necessary* for that end: For as for the first, the *Gift* of *Tongues*, it seems to have been continued no longer than till the Gospel had been preached *to*, and some Converts made *in* the several Nations, the *First-fruits* of whom were always ordained to the Work of the Ministry; and when once the several Nations had *Natives* of their own to preach the Gospel to them in their *own* Languages, there was no farther Necessity of this miraculous Gift of Tongues. And then as for the second, the *Gift* of *Revelation*, it seems to have been continued no longer than till the whole *New Testament* was revealed, and the several Parts of it were collected into *one Volume*, and distributed to the several Churches; after which there was no farther Necessity of any *new* Revelation. But as for the third, the *Gift* of *Miracles*, it seems to have been continued much longer than either of the *former*, as indeed there was longer Occasion for it, especially for that of ejecting *evil Spirits*, who for many Ages, had been the Gods of the World, and detecting their *Frauds* and *Impostures*, that so by beholding the manifold Triumphs of Christ's Power over them, the Heathen might be at length convinced of the *Falseness* of their *own* Religion, and of the *Truth* of *Christ's*; and accordingly *this* Gift, as I shall shew hereafter, was continued in the Church for above Two hundred Years together, till it had wrought its designed effect, *i. e.* had sufficiently detected the *Fraud* and *Malice* of those Idol-Gods, to the Conviction of all that were convincible, and then it was withdrawn as being no farther necessary. And then as for the last, *viz.* the *Gift* of *Counsel* and *Direction*, it seems to have been continued no longer than till the Government of the Church was every where *established*, and its Affairs reduced into a stated *Course* and *Method*, by which sufficient Provision being made against those emergent Difficulties, with which the State of Christianity was perplexed, *this* Gift also ceased, together with the *Reason* and *Necessity* of it. Thus by these extraordinary *Gifts* and *Operations* the Holy Ghost continued to *solicite* the Cause of Christ and his Religion in the World, till by their invincible Evidence he had baffled the *Malice* and *Prejudice* of a *deluded* World, and *captivated* Mankind into the *Belief* and *Obedience* of the Gospel; and this being effected, he discontinued those *Extraordinaries*, and now proceeds to solicit the same Cause in a more *ordinary* and *standing* Way and Method, *viz.* by *Cooperating* with Mens Minds and Wills in a more *human* and *regular* manner, by joining in with their *Reason*, and thereby influencing their *Wills* and *Affections*; which brings me to the

2. Second sort of the Holy Ghost's Operations, *viz.* that which he *ordinarily* doth, and always *hath* done, and will always continue to do: For, upon the Cessation of these his *miraculous* Operations, the Holy Ghost did not wholly *withdraw* himself from Mankind, but he still *continues* mediating with us,

under Christ, in order to the reconciling our *Wills* and *Affections* to God, and subduing that inveterate *Malice* and *Enmity* against him, which our *degenerate* Nature hath contracted: For it is by this blessed Spirit that Christ hath promised to *be with us to the End of the World*, Mat. xxviii. 20. and Christ himself hath assured us, that upon his Ascension into Heaven, he *would pray his Father, and he should give us another Comforter*, meaning this Holy Ghost, *that he might abide with us for ever*, John xiv. 16. and accordingly the Holy Ghost is *vitally united* to the Church of Christ, even as Souls are united to their Bodies: For as *there is one Body*, *i. e.* Church, so *there is one Spirit*, *i. e.* one Holy Ghost which *animates* that Body, *Eph.* iv. 4. and hence the Unity of the Church is in the foregoing Verse called the *Unity of the Spirit*; because as the Soul, by *diffusing* itself thro' all the Parts of the Body, *unites* them together, and keeps them from *flying abroad*, and *dispersing* into Atoms; so the Holy Spirit by diffusing himself thro'out this *mystical* Body, *joins* and *unites* all its Parts together, and makes it one *separate* and *individual* Corporation. So that, when by Baptism we are once incorporated into this Body, we are intitled *to*, and do at least, *de jure*, participate *of* the vital Influence of the Holy Ghost, who is the *Soul* of it; and accordingly, as Baptism joins us to that *Body*, of which this Divine Spirit is the *Soul*; so it also conveys that Divine Spirit to us. So that as in *natural* Bodies, those Ligaments which *unite* and *tie* the Parts to one another, do also convey *Life* and *Spirit* to them all; so also in this *mystical* Body, those *federal* Rites of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which are, as it were, its *Nerves* and *Arteries*, that *join* and *confederate* its Members to one another, are also the Conveyances of that *spiritual* Life from the Holy Ghost, which *moves* and *actuates* them all. And hence *the washing of Regeneration*, and *the renewing of the Holy Ghost*, the *being born of Water and of the Holy Ghost*, are put together as concurrent Things; and in *Acts* ii. 38. Baptism is affirmed to be necessary to our receiving the Holy Ghost; and if by Baptism we receive the Holy Ghost, that is, a *Right* and *Title* to his *Grace* and *Influence*, then must the Holy Ghost be still supposed *vitally united* to the Church, whereof we are made Members by our Baptism, and like an *Omnipresent Soul*, to be *diffused* all thro' it, and to *move* and *actuate* every part of it by his heavenly *Grace* and *Influence*.

It is true, he doth not move and actuate us by mere *Force* and irresistible *Power*, so as to *necessitate* us, or to *determine* our natural Liberty one way or t'other, nor doth he ordinarily work upon Men in such a *strange* and *miraculous* way as he did in the first Ministration of the Gospel, when he frequently transformed Men, in an instant, from *Beasts* and *Devils* into *Saints*, and, as it were, at one Act, turned the whole *Tide* of their Natures into a quite contrary *Current*: For so *Origen* against *Celsus* very often triumphs in these *sudden* and *miraculous* Conversions, wrought by the Christian Religion; so *lib.* 1. *p.* 21. Should any Man, saith he, release Mens Souls from all sorts of Wickedness, from Lust, and Unrighteousness, and Contempt of God, and this but in an hundred Instances, surely no Man would imagine that he could ever have inspired so many Men with Reasons strong enough to conquer so many Vices without a *Divine* Assistance; but if you inquire into the Lives of those that have embraced Christianity, you will find that whereas before they lived in all Impurities and Lusts, ἐξ οὗ δὲ παρειλήφασι τὸν λόγον, τίνα τρόπον γεγόνασιν ἐπιεικέστεροι καὶ σεμνότεροι καὶ εὐσταθέστεροι, *i. e.* from that very time wherein they received the Word, how much more equal and temperate, serious and constant are they grown? So again, *lib.* 2. *p.* 78. in Answer to *Celsus*, who calls Christianity a pestilent Doctrine, neither *Jew*, saith he, nor any one else can ever make it out, ὅτι ὄλεθρος τοσούτους ἀνθρώπους ἐπιστρέφει ἀπὸ τῆς χύσεως τῶν κακῶν ἐπὶ τὸν κατὰ φύσιν μετὰ σωφροσύνης καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν ἀρετῶν βίον, *i. e.* that a pestilent Doctrine should so wonderfully convert the most profligate Persons that embraced it, to a Life most suitable to Nature and Reason, and all manner of Virtue. Such were the *miraculous* Operations of the

the Holy Ghost in those Days, as to transport Men, in an instant, from an *inveterate* Habit of Wickedness to a Habit of Piety and Virtue: For so *Lactantius de fals. sup. lib.* 3. *c.* 26. What a mighty Influence the divine Precepts have upon Mens Souls daily experience shews: For, saith he, *Da mihi virum qui sit iracundus, maledicus, effrænatus; paucissimis Dei verbis tam placidum quam ovem reddam: da cupidum, avarum, tenacem; jam tibi eum liberalem dabo & pecuniam suam plenis manibus largientem: da timidum doloris ac mortis; jam cruces & ignes & taurum contemnet: da libidinosum, adulterum, ganeonem; jam sobrium, castum, continentem videbis: da crudelem, & sanguinis appetentem; jam in veram clementiam furor ille mutabitur: da injustum, insipientem, peccatorem; continuò & æquus & prudens & innocens erit. i. e.* Give me a Man who is *wrathful, reproachful, ungovernable,* and with a few Words of God, I will render him as *placid* as a Lamb; give me a *covetous,* a *niggardly* and *tenacious* Man, I will return him to thee *liberal,* and *distributing* his Money with a *bountiful* Hand; give me one that is *timorous* of Grief and Death, he shall *despise* all manner of *Torment*; give me one that is *lustful, adulterous,* and a *Buffoon,* you shall presently see him *sober, chaste,* and *continent*; give me one that is *cruel* and thirsty of Blood, his *Fury* shall be immediately converted into *Pity* and *Clemency*; give me one that is *unjust, foolish,* and *criminal,* and he shall be presently rendred *just, prudent,* and *innocent*: Which wondrous Changes were so very *frequent* in the Primitive Times, that the Heathens, as St. *Austin* hath observed, were very much *amazed* at them, and therefore attributed them to the Power of *Magick,* thinking it impossible they should ever be effected without the Assistance of some very *powerful Spirit.*

But since Christianity hath been *spread* thro' the World, and *prevailed* so far as to be the Religion of Nations, the Divine Spirit doth not *ordinarily* work upon Men in such a *strange* and *miraculous* way, nor produce in them such *sudden* Changes and *instantaneous* Conversions; but proceeds more *gradually,* and more suitably to the Methods of Human Nature, by joining in with our *Understandings,* and leading us on by *Reason* and *Perswasion* from *Acts* to *Dispositions,* and from *Dispositions* to *Habits* of Piety. So that whatsoever *Grace* he *now* affords us, it ordinarily works on us in the same *way,* and after the same *manner,* as if all were performed by the Strength of our *own* Reason; so that in the *Renovation* of our Natures, we cannot certainly distinguish what is done by the *Spirit,* from what is done by our *natural Reason* and *Conscience* cooperating with *him*; only this we do most certainly know, that in this blessed Work the Spirit is the *main* and *principal* Agent; that *without him we can do nothing*; and that *he is the Author and Finisher of our Faith,* who *worketh in us to will and to do according to his own pleasure*; but yet that he doth not work upon us as a *Mechanick* upon *dead* Materials; but as upon *living* and *free* Agents, that *can* and *must* cooperate with him; that he acts not on us by any *necessary* Causality, but in such a way as is fairly consistent with the *natural Liberty* of our Wills; and doth not renew us whether we *will* or *no,* but takes our free *Consent* and *Endeavour* along with him; and that having done all on *his* part, that is necessary to perswade us, he expects that we should *consider* what he saith, and upon that, consent to his *gracious* Motions, and express this Consent in a constant Course of *holy* and *virtuous* Endeavour; and that unless we do *thus* concur with him, we shall for ever *remain* and *perish* in our Sin, notwithstanding all that Grace which he affords us. But as for the particular *manner* of the Holy Ghost's Operation on our Mind, it is not to be expected that we, who know so little of the *Nature* and *Intercourse* of Spirits, should be able to render a *clear* and *distinct* Account of it; only thus much may be said, that our Soul being a *thinking* Spirit, whose very Essence consists in a Power or principle of *Cogitation,* seems naturally incapable of any other Passion from any *external* Agent, but only the Impression of *Thoughts*: For how can a *Spirit,* whose very Essence is *thinking,* be any otherwise affected by any thing *without* it, but only by being made to *think,* or

by having ſuch *Thoughts* and *Conſiderations* impreſs'd on it? And by the ſame reaſon that Bodies, which are *material* Subſtances, are impreſſible only by *Matter*, Souls which are *thinking* Subſtances, muſt be impreſſible only by *Thought.* And hence we find by Experience, that there is no Object we converſe with can any otherwiſe affect our *Mind,* than by ſuggeſting ſuch *Thoughts* and *Cogitations* to it; and that all the *Pleaſure* and *Torment* of our Minds conſiſts in *joyful* and *tormenting* Thoughts; which are plain Arguments that our Mind is a ſort of Being, which nothing but Thought can *ſtrike* or *touch,* and which hath no *ſenſe* or *feeling* of any thing, but only of *dreadful* or *hopeful, pleaſant* or *painful* Cogitations. And if this be ſo, then the way of the Holy Spirit's working upon our Minds, ſuppoſing that he works ſuitably to their Natures, muſt be by *inſpiring* or *impreſſing* them with Thoughts: For as he is an infinite Spirit, he is *always* and *every where* preſent with our Spirits, and hath an *immediate* Acceſs to them, by Virtue of which he can ſpeak to our Minds *whenever* and *whatever* he pleaſes, and alſo *urge* what he ſpeaks with that *Life* and *Power,* as to excite our moſt *ſerious* Conſideration and Attention; and by this it is that he *ordinarily* works upon us, in order to the reducing us to God, *viz.* by *inſpiring* ſuch good Thoughts into our Minds, as are moſt apt to *move* and *perſwade* us to *believe* and *obey* the Goſpel, and by a continued Repetition of them *urging* and *preſſing* them upon us, in order to the reducing our *vain* and *roving* Minds to a *fixed* and *ſerious* Attention to them: For it is very apparent that our *Faith* and all our good *Reſolutions* are the *immediate* Effects of *deep* and *ſerious* Conſideration. *I conſidered my Ways,* ſaith *David, and turned my Feet unto thy Teſtimonies.* So that in reducing us to *God,* the great Work of the *Spirit* is to reduce us to a *fixed* and *ſteady* Conſideration: which being once effected, there naturally follows a *good Reſolution,* unleſs the Will be *invincibly* obſtinate; and to this as naturally ſucceeds the *actual* Return of the Soul to God. Now to reduce us to this fixed Conſideration, the Holy Ghoſt, in the firſt place, *ſuggeſts* good Thoughts to our Minds; and then to keep our Minds *fixed* and *intent* on them, that ſo our worldly *Cares* or *Pleaſures* may not divert us from them, he moſt importunately *urges* and *repeats* the ſame Thoughts, or *ſeconds* them with a *train* and *ſucceſſion* of new ones to the ſame purpoſe: ſo that unleſs we are *incorrigibly* obſtinate againſt *all* good Motions, we cannot avoid admitting them into our moſt *ſerious* Conſideration; and when they are *there,* they cannot fail of raiſing in us good *Deſires* and *Affections,* which if we carefully *cheriſh,* will ſoon determine in holy *Purpoſes* and *Reſolutions.* In all which Things, you ſee, it is only by *Impreſſion* of *Thoughts,* that the Holy Spirit operates on our Minds. But this will more plainly appear, by conſidering thoſe *particular* Operations on our Minds, which the Scripture attributes to the Holy Ghoſt, all which may be ranked under theſe Five Heads;

1. *Illumination.*
2. *Sanctification.*
3. *Quickning* or *Excitation.*
4. *Comforting* or *Supporting.*
5. *Interceſſion.*

Firſt, *Illumination,* or *Informing* our Minds with the *light* of heavenly Truth; thus *Eph.* i. 17, 18. the Apoſtle prays, *that the God of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of Glory, would give unto them the Spirit of Wiſdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of him, that the Eyes of their Underſtanding being enlightned, they might know what is the Hope of Chriſt's Calling, and what the Riches of the Glory of his Inheritance in the Saints;* and 1 *Cor.* ii. 12. we are told, that it is by *receiving the Spirit of God that we know the Things that are freely given us of God.* Now this Illumination of the Spirit is two-fold; Firſt, External, by that *Revelation* which he hath given us of God's *Mind* and *Will* in the holy Scripture, and that *miraculous* Evidence, by which he *ſealed* and *atteſted* it; *for all Scripture is given by Inſpiration of God,* 2 Tim. iii. 16. or, as it is elſewhere expreſſed *was delivered*

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by holy Men, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, 2 Pet. i. 21. And all those miraculous Testimonies we have to the *Truth* and *Divinity* of Scripture, are, as hath been already proved, from the Holy Ghost, and upon that account are called *the Demonstration of the Spirit.* So that all that *Light* we receive from Scripture, and all the *Evidence* we have that *that* Light is *Divine*, we derive *originally* from the Holy Spirit. But besides this *External* Illumination of the Spirit, there is also an *Internal* one, which consists in *impressing* that external Light and Evidence of Scripture upon our *Understandings*, whereby we are enabled more clearly to *apprehend*, and more effectually to *believe* it: For tho the Divine Spirit doth not (at least in the *ordinary* Course of his Operation) illuminate our Minds with any *new* Truths, or *new* Evidences of Truth, but only presents to our Minds those *Old* and *Primitive* Truths, and Evidences, which he at first revealed and gave to the World; yet there is no doubt, but he still continues not only to *suggest* them both to our Minds, but to *urge* and *repeat* them with that *Importunity*, and thereby to imprint them with that *Clearness* and *Efficacy* as that if we do not, thro' a *wicked* Prejudice against them, *wilfully* divert our Minds from them to *vain* or *sinful* Objects, we must unavoidably *apprehend* them far more *distinctly*, and *assent* to them far more *cordially* and *effectually* than otherwise we *should* or *could* have done: For, alas! our Minds are naturally so *vain* and *stupid*, so *giddy*, *listless*, and *inadvertent*; especially in *Spiritual* Things which are *abstract* from common Sense, as that did not the Holy Spirit frequently *present*, importunately *urge*, and thereby *fix* them on our Minds, our *Knowledge* of them would be so *confused* and our *Belief* so *wavering* and *unstable*, as that they would never have any *prevailing* Influence on our *Wills* and *Affections*. So that our *Knowledge* and *Belief* of divine Things, so far forth as they are *saving* and *effectual* to our Renovation, are the Fruits and Products of this *internal* Illumination of the Spirit.

Secondly, Another of these ordinary Operations of the Spirit, is *Sanctification*; which consists in the *purifying* our Wills and Affections from those wicked *Inclinations* and inordinate *Lusts*, which *countermand* God's Will in us, and set us at *Enmity* against him; and *this* also the Scripture attributes to the Holy Spirit. So *Tit.* iii. 5. *For according to his Mercy he saveth us by the washing of Regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost*; and in 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. *But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justifyed, in the Name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* And this is the meaning of our being *sealed by the Spirit*, so often mentioned in the New Testament, *viz.* our receiving his *Image* or *Impression* from him; which consists in *Holiness* and *Righteousness*; and by this Image or *Impression* we are *discriminated* and *set apart* from the rest of the World, as *a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, and a peculiar People*, 1 Pet. ii. 9. *and made Kings and Priests unto God*, Rev. i. 6. upon which account we are said to be *anointed by the Spirit*, 1 John ii. 20. and by the same Image, we are also *intitled* to, and *secured* of, all the Blessings of the New Covenant; upon which account it is called, *The Earnest of the Spirit*, and *the first Fruits of the Spirit.* And this Image of himself the Holy Ghost produces in us, by suggesting to our Minds the powerful *Motives* and *Arguments* of Religion; and by often reiterating, imprints them upon us with all their native *Force* and *Efficacy*, in the most *lively* and *affecting* Characters; and by these his blessed Suggestions, he, by degrees, *persuades* and *bends* our stubborn Wills, *melts* and *mollifies* our *hard* Hearts, *reduces* and *tempers* our *wild* Affections to a *willing* Compliance with the Will of God; and at length to a *hearty* Complacency in all those Instances of *Piety* and *Virtue*, wherein our *Sanctification*, or this Image of himself, consists; which Operation of the Spirit we frequently *experience* in our selves: For, how often do we find *good* Thoughts *injected* into our Minds, we know not *how* nor *whence*, which are many times improved into such *strong* and *vehement* Convictions of the *Folly* and *Danger* of our Sin; as, even in the midst of our loose *Mirth* and *Jollity*, and in *despite* of all

our Endeavours to *chase* them from our Minds, and *rock* ourselves into a deep *security*, cease not to *follow* and *haunt*, and *importune* us; till they have *scared* us into *wise* and *sober* Resolutions: And tho we, like *ungrateful* Creatures, do oftentimes *stifle* the good Motions of the Spirit, and turn a *deaf* Ear to his Calls and *gracious* Invitations, yet doth he not presently give us *over*, but *still*, as we are running away from him, we hear a voice behind us calling after us to *return*; and tho we still *run on*, yet still he *follows* us with his Importunities thro' the whole course of our *sinful* Life, till either he hath *brought* us *back*, or sees us past all *hope* of *Recovery*. And indeed such is the *degeneracy* of our Natures, the *vanity* of our Minds, and the *prejudice* of our Wills and Affections against *God* and *Goodness*, that, without this *sanctifying* influence of the Holy Ghost, it is certain no Man ever *was*, or ever *will* be reclaimed to a State of *Piety* and *Virtue*. For tho our Religion furnishes us with such *Motives* as are infinitely sufficient to *persuade* us, and tho our *Minds* and *Wills* are not so *depraved*, but that still we are naturally capable to *consider*, and naturally free to *follow* those Motives; yet so *vain* and *roving* are our Minds, so *averse* to all *serious* and *spiritual* Thoughts; so *stubborn* and *inflexible* are our Wills to those spiritual Duties, which those Motives persuade to? so *cankered* and *prejudiced* against them, that, did not the Holy Ghost frequently *impress* them on our Minds, and pathetically *urge* and *apply* them to our Wills and Affections, we should never of ourselves so *thorowly* consider them, as to be *conquered* and *persuaded* by them; but either our *Thoughts* would presently *fly away* from them, and *rove* into sensual Cares or Pleasures, or our *Wills* and *Affections*, by objecting their *Prejudice*, and the *Interest* of their Lusts against them, would infallibly *baffle* and *defeat* them. So that it is to this *sanctifying influence* of the Holy Ghost, that all the *Graces* and good *Dispositions* of our Minds are owing.

Thirdly, Another of these ordinary Operations of the Spirit is *Quickening* or *Exciting* us in the ways of Piety, and Virtue. For as by his *sanctifying* influence he first *inspires* us with *spiritual* Life, so he still proceeds to *cherish* and *invigorate* it, and to quicken it up into *Activity* and *Motion*, whenever he perceives it *droop* or *languish*. Hence the Apostle, *Gal.* v. 25. *If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit, i. e.* if we have received Spiritual Life from him, let us *move* and *act* by him; and hence also we are said to be *led by the Spirit of God, i. e.* to be *moved* and *conducted* in our motion by him, *Rom.* viii. 14. And this he also doth, partly by *admonishing* and putting us in mind of our Duty, which, in the *Croud* and *Hurry* of our worldly Occasions, we are too prone to *forget*, and partly *suggesting* to our Minds such *Considerations* of Religion as are most apt to *quicken* our sluggish endeavour, to *allure* our hope, or *alarm* our fear, or *affect* our ingenuity; and by these to *excite* our *zeal*, and render us more *active* and *vigorous* in the ways of Piety and Virtue: And, of this operation of the Holy Spirit, there is no good Man but hath *frequent* experience. For thus, when our Thoughts are *squandred* abroad among our worldly *Cares* and *Pleasures*, we are many Times assaulted with *unexpected* Temptations, which finding our Minds in a *careless*, *forgetful*, and *incogitant* posture, are apt to *surprize* and *hurry* us into *sinful* Actions before we are *aware*, in which nick of time a *good Thought* is suddenly *shot* into our Minds to *warn* and *admonish* us, of the *precipice* of sin and guilt we are *falling into*; by which, if we are not wilfully *deaf* and *inadvertent* to it, the Temptation is *discovered*, and *baffled*, and *defeated*; and thus, also, when thro' the many Temptations that do here surround us, our *zeal* for God and Goodness doth at any Time *languish*; and we begin to grow *cold* and *indifferent* in Religion; we find a world of good Thoughts *pressing* so hard upon our Minds, as that without doing *violence* to ourselves, we cannot avoid *listening* and *attending* to them; and when they have almost forced themselves into our attention, there they do so *vigorously* struggle with our *reluctant* Wills, so pathetically address to our *listless* Affections, that,

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without *equal* violence to ourselves, we cannot avoid being *moved* by their *Persuasions*, and at last *conquered* by their powerful *Importunities*. Now these good Thoughts are many Times the immediate *Inspirations* and *Whispers* of the Holy Spirit to our Minds, which he very often *imprints* on us, with that *life* and *vigor*, and *repeats* and *urges* with that efficacious *Ardor* and restless *Importunity*, that unless we are strangely *obstinate*, we cannot find in our Hearts to *repel* or *resist* them.

Fourthly, Another of these ordinary Operations of the Holy Spirit on Mens Minds is *comforting* and *supporting* them, or *inspiring* their Minds with such *Joys* and *Refreshments*, as are necessary to *support* them under the *Difficulties* and *Temptations* they are here exposed to. For this Operation of the Spirit is a *standing* provision against such Difficulties and Temptations, as are too *great* for an *ordinary* patience and courage to *contest* with, and is not *ordinarily* vouchsafed to us, but only at *such* Times when we are called to *do* or *suffer* something *beyond* ourselves, and *above* our own strength and ability; in which Cases we are secured of this *supporting* influence of the Spirit by that Promise, 1 *Cor*. x. 13. *God is faithful, who will not suffer ye to be tempted above what ye are able, but will with the Temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* For thus we read of the Primitive Church, that they *walked in the comfort of the Holy Ghost*, Acts ix. 31. *i. e.* had the constant *supporting* influence of the Spirit of God, to *strengthen* and *bear up* their Minds under that *mighty* Work and those *grievous* Persecutions they were to undergo; and the Apostle makes it his earnest Prayer to God for his Christian *Romans*, that *he would fill them with all joy and peace in believing*; that is, in their Profession of the Christian Faith, *and that they might abound in hope thro' the power of the Holy Ghost*, Rom. xv. 13. And accordingly we find the Ages of *Persecution* abounding with *remarkable* Instances of *this* operation of the Holy Ghost. For whereas constant *Persecutions* never failed to exterminate *false* Religions from the World; witness the *Heathen* Religion and the Christian *Heresies*, the *Priscillians*, *Arians*, and *Donatists*, which whilst they were *tolerated* or *connived* at, did mightily *increase* and *multiply*, but under *vigorous* Persecutions immediately *shrunk*, and in a little Time *dwindled* into nothing; the *true* Christianity, on the contrary, *bore* up its head under the *heaviest* Oppressions, and *triumph'd* in the midst of *Flames*, and was so far from being *vanquished* by all the *barbarous* Cruelties of its Persecutors, that the more they *persecuted* it, the more it *conquered* and *prevailed*; which doubtless is in a great measure to be attributed to this *supporting* influence of the Holy Spirit, which still accompanied its *Confessors* and *Martyrs*. For, how was it possible that a Company of *tender* Virgins, *delicate* Matrons, and *aged* Bishops, could ever have endured those *long* and *dolorous* Martyrdoms, as many Times they did, when their Tormentors *took* their *turns* from Morning to Night; and *plied* them with all *Kinds* of Cruelties, till they were oftentimes forced to *give over*, and *confess* that they had not *Heart* enough to *inflict* the Tortures which those poor Sufferers had *courage* enough to *endure*? How could they have *sung* in the midst of Flames, *smiled* upon Racks, *triumph'd* upon Wheels and *Catasta's*, and there *challenged* their Executioners, as they often did, to *distend* their Limbs to the *utmost* stretch, to *tear* their flesh with *Ungulæ*, to *scorch* their tender Parts with Fires, and *rake* their Bowels with *Spikes* and *Gaunches*? How, I say, could they have endured all these *miserable* harasings of their tender Flesh, with the most *witty* and *exquisite* Tortures, and this sometimes for sundry Days *together*; when for one *base* and *cowardly* Word they might have been *released* when they *pleased*, had they not been *supported* with an *invisible* hand, and *refreshed* with such *strong* Consolations, as not only *abated*, but sometimes quite *extinguished* their Pains? And the *same* Comforts, tho not perhaps in the same *degree*, other good Men have *frequently* experienced; sometimes upon their undertaking some *great* and *Heroick* Office of Piety or Virtue; sometimes in their *conflict* with some *great* Temptation;

Temptation; ſometimes when they have been ſorely *oppreſſed* with ſome mighty Sorrow or Affliction; and ſometimes in the *hour* and *extremities* of Death: For it is only upon *theſe*, or ſuch like *extraordinary* Occaſions, that the Holy Spirit uſually adminiſters theſe great Conſolations to our Minds. And this he alſo performs in the *ſame* manner as he doth the aforenamed Operations, *viz.* by *ſuggeſting to* and vigorouſly *impreſſing* comfortable Thoughts *upon* our Minds; for there is no doubt but that as he can impreſs on us what *Thought* ſoever he pleaſes, ſo he can alſo impreſs it with what *ſtrength* and *vigour* ſoever he pleaſes; and accordingly as he impreſſes a comfortable Thought on us *more* or *leſs* vigorouſly, it muſt of neceſſity be a *greater* or a *leſs* Conſolation to us. If he think *fit*, and our State *require* it, he can imprint a comfortable Thought on us with that *ſtrength* and *vehemence*, as that it ſhall even *raviſh* us from our *ſenſe*, and ſo *ingroſs* all our attention to it, as that we ſhall be altogether *mindleſs* and *inſenſible* of any *Pain* or *Pleaſure* of the Body. For thus it is uſual for *ſerious* Contemplators, in their *profound* Muſings to collect and call together *all* their animal Spirits to attend that work, ſo that many Times there are *none* or not *enough* at leaſt, remaining to ſupply the Offices of their *Senſe*, and carry on the *inferiour* Operations of Nature; and if we ourſelves by *intenſe* thinking can thus *alienate* our Minds from *Senſe*, we may eaſily ſuppoſe that the Holy Ghoſt, who hath the *command* of our Minds, can, when he pleaſes, ſtamp a *joyous* Thought ſo *vigorouſly* upon them, as that it ſhall inſtantly *tranſport* them into an *ecſtaſy*, and *raviſh* them from all *corporeal* Senſation. And, that *thus* he *hath* done, is notoriouſly evident in the above-named *Martyrs*, whoſe *Senſes* were many Times ſo *intranc'd* by the *rapturous* Contemplations their *Minds* were *ſeized* with, that they lay *ſmiling* and ſometimes *ſinging* under the bloody Hands of their Tormentors, without any *apparent* ſenſe of thoſe *long* and *exquiſite* Cruelties that were practiſed upon them. And tho the bleſſed Spirit ſeldom applies theſe *ſtrong* and *powerful* Cordials to pious Minds, but in ſuch *great* and *urgent* Extremities, it being much more for their intereſt to be kept *humble* and *lowly*, than to be *raviſhed* with continued Comforts; yet *ordinarily* he adminiſters a *ſtanding* Peace and Satisfaction to them, and whenever their Neceſſities *call* for it, he inſpires them with ſuch *degrees* of Joy and Conſolation, as their Caſe and Condition *requires*.

Fifthly and *Laſtly*, Another of theſe ordinary Operations of the Holy Spirit on Mens Minds is *Interceſſion*, by which he *enables* us to offer up our Prayers to God with ſuch *ardent* and *devout* Affections as are in ſome meaſure ſuitable to the *matter* we pray for. For Prayer being the immediate *converſe* of our Souls with God, wherein our Minds are obliged to *withdraw* themſelves from *Senſe* and *ſenſible* Things, and wholly to *retire* themſelves from thoſe Objects to which they are moſt *endeared* and *familiarized*, into the *Divine* and *Spiritual* World, there is no one Duty whatſoever, to the due performance of which our *carnal* Affections are naturally more *liſtleſs* and *averſe*; and therefore as herein we have moſt *need* of the Holy Spirit's Aſſiſtance, ſo herein he more *eſpecially* operates on our Minds, *exciting* in us all thoſe *Graces* and *Affections* which are proper to the ſeveral Parts of our Prayer, ſuch as *Shame* and *Sorrow* in the *Confeſſion* of our Sins; a *Senſe* of our *need* of Mercy, and a *hope* of *obtaining* it, in our *Supplications* for *Pardon* and *Forgiveneſs*; *Reſignation* to God's *Will* and *Dependance* on his *Truth* and *Goodneſs*, in our addreſs for *temporal* Mercies and Deliverances; *Hunger* and *Thirſt* after *Righteouſneſs*, in our *Petitions* for his *Grace* and *Aſſiſtance*; and in a word *Gratitude*, and *Love*, and *Admiration* of God, in our *Praiſes* and *Thankſgivings* for *Mercy*; and in theſe *Divine* Affections the *Life* and *Soul* of Prayer conſiſts. And accordingly in *Gal.* iv. 6. the Apoſtle tells us, *Becauſe ye are Sons, God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts, crying, Abba, Father*; that is, by kindling *devout* and *pious* Affections in your Souls, enabling you to cry to God with all *earneſtneſs* and *aſſurance*, as to a *kind* and *merciful* Father; and hence alſo

we are said to pray *in* or *by* the Holy Ghost, *Jude* 20. because all the proper *Graces* and *Affections* of Prayer are *excited* in us by him. And this his excitation of the Graces of Prayer in us is called his *making Intercession for us*, *Rom.* viii. 26, 27. which imports no more than his *enabling* us to offer up the *matter* of our Prayers to God in a most *devout* and *affectionate* manner, or, as he there explains himself, *with Sighs and Groans that are not to be uttered*, that is; with such *earnest* and *flagrant* Affections as are too *big* for *words* to express. And this is properly to *intercede* for us. For as Christ, who is our Advocate in *Heaven*, doth *offer up* our Prayers to the Father, and *enforce* them with his own *Intercessions*; so his Spirit, who is our Advocate on *Earth*, begets in us those *Affections* which render our Prayers *prevalent*, and wings them with *fervor* and *ardency*; the one pleads with God for us in our *own Hearts*, by *kindling* such *Desires* there as render our Prayers *acceptable* to him, and the other pleads with him for us in *Heaven*, by *presenting* those *Desires*, and *soliciting* their *supply* and *acceptance*. Now this *Intercession* of the Holy Spirit is also performed, as all the foregoing Operations, by *suggesting to*, and *imprinting* such Thoughts *upon* our Minds, as are most apt to *raise* and *excite* our Affections; which Thoughts he often *urges* with that *vehemence*, and *presses* with that reiterated *importunity*, that if we do not wilfully *repel* them from our *Minds*, and *refuse* them admittance to our *Hearts* and *Affections*, they cannot fail to stir up in us all the *Graces* of *Prayer*, and inflame our Souls with a fervent Devotion; and accordingly, whenever we *harbour* these Suggestions of the Spirit, and by seriously attending to them, *cherish* and *encourage* them, we find by experience they so *affect* and *influence* our Devotions, as that in every Prayer our Souls take wing, and, like the Angel that appeared to *Manoah*, fly up to Heaven in the Flames of our Sacrifice.

And thus I have given a brief account both of what the Holy Spirit *hath* done, and of what he still *continues* to do, towards the *promoting* and *effectuating* of Christ's Mediation *for* God *with* Men: And by what hath been said, it abundantly appears that he hath done for us, and still continues to do all that our *Case* and *Necessity* requires; and that there is nothing imaginable wanting on *his* part towards the *reducing* and *reconciling* our Minds to God. So that now he may justly say to us what God doth to his Vineyard, *Isai.* v. 4. *What could I have done more for my Vineyard that I have not done?* Or, as the *Hebrew* expresses it, *What is to be done more?* Not but that by his *omnipotent* Power *absolutely* considered, the Holy Spirit *can* do more for us than he *ordinarily* doth; he can in an *instant* infuse a *new* Nature into us, in despite of all the *resistance* of our *Wills*, and make such *irresistible* Impressions on our Minds, as our most *inveterate* prejudice and enmity against God shall never be able to *withstand*; but then his *Power* always acts by the Direction of his *Wisdom*, and can do no *otherwise*; that is, it can do no more than it can *wisely* do, and it is certain that *ordinarily* and *regularly* it cannot *wisely* so act upon Men, as to *determine* their natural *liberty* to good and evil, since by so doing he must not only commit a perpetual *violence* on the *frame* of our *Beings*, and thereby *reverse* the established *course* of our *Natures*, but also destroy the very *being* of *Virtue* in us, which is no longer Virtue than while it is *free* and *unconstrained*: But whatsoever he can *wisely* do, or which is all one, *consistently* with the Liberty of *our* Nature, he *hath* done, and still *continues* doing. So that now, to the reduction of our Souls to God, there is nothing wanting but our own *consent* and free *cooperation*, which if we *will* refuse we *may*; for, for desperate *obstinacy* there is no *remedy*: if *we* will *not* comply with the blessed Spirit, it is certain *he* will not *save* us whether *we* will or *no*. So that when *inquisition* shall be made for the *blood* of our *Souls*, the utmost we can charge *him* with, is, that he did not *drag* us to Heaven in *spite* of our *teeth*, and *bind* up our *Hands* in the Cords of an *irresistible* Fate, to *hinder* us from *murdering* ourselves: But, if *we* have so *little* regard of *ourselves* as to *spurn* at our own Happiness, it is by no means fit that *he* should force it upon us,

 and

and it would be a very *mean* and *unreaſonable* Condeſcenſion in him to *proſtitute* his Grace to ſuch as *ſcorn* and *refuſe* it. If therefore, after all theſe Things that the Spirit hath done for us, we *perſiſt* and finally *periſh* in our *enmity* againſt God, he may fairly *waſh* his *Hands* in Innocency over us, and charge our Blood upon our *own* Heads; and, how *deplorable* ſoever our Condition proves in the *future* State, his *Juſtice* will *triumph* gloriouſly in our *ruin*; and our own *Conſciences*, together with all the reaſonable World, will be forced to be his *Compurgators*, and to pronounce him infinitely *Juſt* and *Righteous* in all his Ways.

SECT. II.

Concerning the particular *Offices of Chriſt*'s Mediation.

FOR the clearer ſtating what are the *particular* Offices of the *Mediator*, it will be neceſſary briefly to inquire into the *ſtate* and *condition* of the *Parties* between whom he mediates, as they ſtand *related* to one another. For he, being to officiate *for* and *between* God and Man, to be ſure his Offices muſt be ſuch as their *reſpective* States and Conditions do *require*. For how can he officiate *effectually* between them, unleſs he performs all thoſe good Offices on *both* Sides, which, conſidering their States as they ſtand *related* to one another, are neceſſary to create a mutual *accord* and *agreement* between them? Now the ſtate of *God*, as he ſtands related to *us*, is that of a *ſupreme* and *abſolute* Sovereign, over *blind* and *rebellious* Subjects, who were ſo far *depraved* and *degenerated*, as that we neither *underſtood* his Will, nor were at all *diſpoſed* to *obey* it. Wherefore, that he might officiate effectually for *God* with *us*, his *ignorant* and *rebellious* Subjects, it was neceſſary, Firſt, that he ſhould perform the Office of a *Prophet*, in *revealing* God's Will and Pleaſure to us, of which the whole Race of Mankind was ſo *deplorably* ignorant. Secondly, That he ſhould perform the Office of a *King*, in *exacting* our *Obedience* to God, and *ſubduing* our *ſtubborn* Wills to his Heavenly *Pleaſure*; ſo that in officiating for *God* with *us*, it was neceſſary that he ſhould both *teach* us as God's *Prophet*, and *rule* us as God's *King*. And then the State of Man, as it reſpects God is that of a moſt *guilty* and *criminal* Subject, who by a continued courſe of Rebellion, had juſtly and highly *incenſed* and *provoked* his Sovereign Lord againſt him; in which ſtate of Things it was highly neceſſary that, in officiating for *us* with *God*, our Mediator ſhould in the firſt place render him ſome *great* and *honourable* reparation in *our* behalf, ſuch as he, in his infinite Wiſdom, ſhould think meet to *exact* for thoſe *high* and *manifold* Affronts and Indignities which *we* had offered to his *Sacred* Perſon and Authority. For without ſome *ſuch* Reparation he could not well have admitted of any Reconciliation with us, without proſtituting his own Authority, and rendring it *cheap* and *vile* in the Eyes of *bold* and *inſolent* Offenders. Now the greateſt Reparation he could make for us, was to take *our* Puniſhment on *himſelf*, by offering up his *own Life* to God as a *Sacrifice* for the Sins of the World. And then, ſecondly, it was neceſſary, that having made this Reparation for us, he ſhould thereupon become our *Advocate*, and *plead* his Sacrifice to God in *our* behalf, that for the ſake thereof he would be ſo far propitious to us, as to *admit* us, upon our *unfeigned* Repentance, to his *Grace* and *Favour*. Both which are comprehended in the *Prieſtly* Office, which conſiſted, as I ſhall ſhew hereafter, in *atoning* God with *Sacrifice*. So that the *particular* Offices, which the *reſpective* States of God and Man require of him that mediates between them, is to *teach* and *rule* for God, and to *expiate* and *advocate* for Men.

But for the better underſtanding of theſe particular Offices, it is neceſſary we ſhould briefly conſider the *Method* and *Oeconomy* of them, and explain in

what *Order* and *Manner* the Mediator hath *proceeded* and *advanced* in the *Exercise* and *Administration* of them. Which, in short, was thus; by *Commission* from God the Father, he came down into this World, where the *first* Mediatorial Office he undertook, was that of a *Prophet*, in the discharge whereof he made a full *Revelation* of God's Mind and Will to the World. And having *performed this*, at least so far as was *needful* in his *own* Person, he next enters upon the first Part of his *Priestly* Office, which was to make an *Expiation* for the Sins of the World, by the *Sacrifice* of himself; and this being finished, he a little after proceeded to the *other* Part, which was to make an *Oblation* of his Sacrifice to God in *Heaven*, and in *virtue* thereof to *advocate* for us, and *solicite* our Pardon and Admission into the Divine *Favour*; upon the *Performance* of all which, and as a glorious *Reward* of it, he was admitted to sit down at the *Right Hand* of God in the Throne of *Regal* Authority, *next* and *immediately* to the Father. For so *Phil.* ii. 8, 9, 10. the Apostle tells us, *He humbled himself, and became obedient to the Death, even the Death of the Cross; wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow.* And in *Heb.* xii. 2. his *sitting down at the right Hand of the Throne of God*, is the Consequence of his *enduring the Cross, and despising the shame of it.* So that in short the *Order* and *Method* in which he proceeded in his Mediatorial Offices was this; First, he *prophesied*; then he made *Expiation* for our Sins on the Cross; then presented his Expiation in *Heaven*, and therein began to *advocate* or *intercede* for us, and then he received that *Regal* Authority, by which he is to reign till the *Consummation of all Things.* And therefore, for the more *clear* and *distinct* explication of these particular Offices, it will be most proper to treat of them in the same order wherein they are placed in the Divine Oeconomy, beginning first with the *Prophetick*, thence proceeding to the *Priestly*, and thence to the *Kingly* Office.

SECT. III.

Of the Prophetick *Office of Jesus Christ.*

CONsidering the manifold *Errors*, and the deep *Ignorance* in which Mankind was almost universally *lost* and *bewilder'd*, it was absolutely necessary, that he who mediated for *God* with *Men*, in order to the *reconciling* them to him, should in the first place take care to inform them of the *Nature*, and instruct them in the *Will* of God; without which it was impossible for them so much as to know what it is to be reconciled to him. And accordingly this was the *first* Mediatorial Office that our Saviour undertook, *viz.* to *prophesy* to the World, *i. e.* to *reveal* and *publish* the Gospel to Mankind, wherein the *Nature* and the *Will* of God, and the *Method* of our Salvation, are plainly *stated* and *described*, so far forth at least as it is necessary to *our* Reconciliation to him. Upon which account he is called *the Light of the World, the Sun of Righteousness, the Way* and *the Truth*, and *the bright Morning Star*; all which refer to his *Prophetick* Office, which is the Fountain of all that *spiritual* Light, that shines thro' the World: For long before our Saviour was born, it was *foretold* of him, that he should execute the Office of a *Prophet*; so *Deut.* xviii. 15. *The Lord thy God shall raise up unto thee a Prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy Brethren, like unto me, unto him ye shall hearken*; which Prophesy St. *Peter* applies to our Saviour, *Acts* iii. 22. And upon this, and other Prophesies of the Old Testament, it is evident, it was a general *Anticipation* among the *Jews* in our Saviour's Time, that the Messias should be a *Prophet*: For thus, upon Christ's feeding Five Thousand Men with Five Loaves and Two Fishes, they cried out, *This is of a Truth that Prophet that should come into the World*, John vi. 14. so upon his restoring the Centurion's Servant, *they*

were amazed, and glorified God, saying, that a great Prophet was risen up among them, Luke vii. 16. And so also his own Disciples stile him, *A Prophet mighty in Deed and Word before God and all the People.*

Now this *Prophetick* Office of Christ consisted not so much in *foretelling* of *future* Events (tho this he also did so far as it was *needful* for the Church) as in *expounding, declaring* and *making known* the Will of God to us by Divine *Revelation:* For so, to *prophesy* signifies no more than to speak *from* or in the *stead* of another; πρὸ in Composition being all one with ἀντὶ: thus *Exod.* vii. 1. *God said to* Moses, *I have made thee a God to* Pharaoh, *and* Aaron *thy Brother shall be thy Prophet*; that is, he shall be thy *Mouth* to deliver to *Pharaoh* what I shall deliver to *thee:* For so the Word is explained, *Exod.* iv. 16. *He shall be thy Spokesman, he shall be to thee. instead of a Mouth.* And in this Sense the *Poets* were antiently called the *Prophets* of the *Muses*; so *Theocritus,*

Μουσάων δὲ μάλιστα τίειν ἱερὰς ὑποφήτας.

i.e. the sacred *Prophets* of the *Muses*; and Saint *Paul* himself, *Tit.* i. 12. calls the Heathen *Poets* their *Prophets,* quoting a Passage out of *Epimenides*; who, tho he is stiled by *Laertius* θεοφιλέστατος, a great Favourite of the Gods, and, as he relates the Story, directed the *Athenians* how to *lustrate* their City in a Time of Pestilence, yet if we may credit *Aristotle,* οὐ περὶ τῶν ἐσομένων ἐμαντεύετο, *i.e.* he never prophesied of Things to come, *Rhet. l.* 3. *c.* 17. but was only a *Divine,* as *Plutarch* calls him, and θεοφιλὴς καὶ σοφὸς περὶ τὰ θεῖα, *i.e.* a Friend of God, and one that had a deep insight into divine Things. By which it is evident, that *Prophesying* doth not necessarily include, in the true Acceptation of it, *foretelling* Futurities, but only denotes *declaring* the Mind and Will of God, in any matter by divine Inspiration: For so *Justin. Mart.* in *Cohortat. ad Græc.* tells us, that the Prophets *declared* those Things to the World, ἃ τὸ ἅγιον ἐπ' αὐτοὺς κατελθὸν πνεῦμα τοὺς τὴν ἀληθῆ θεοσέβειαν μανθάνειν βουλομένους δι' αὐτῶν διδάσκειν προῄρηται, *i. e.* which the Holy Ghost descending upon them, had intended by them to teach those Persons who were truly willing to be instructed in the true Worship of God. And accordingly St. *Chrysostom,* ὁ προφήτης ἑρμηνευτὴς ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, a Prophet is not only an Interpreter, but an Interpreter of God. And so also *Dionysius* the *Areopag.* stiles the Prophets, τῆς ἀῤῥήτου σοφίας πατέρας, *i. e.* the Fathers of secret Wisdom, *Epist.* 9. because they discovered those Things to the World, which were discoverable only by Divine Inspiration. And in this large Sense of the Word, Christ's *Prophetick* Office is to be understood, *viz.* as a *declaring* and *signifying* the Will of God to Mankind, concerning the *Way* and *Method* of our *Reconciliation* to God and eternal *Salvation* by him. But for the fuller Explication of this his Mediatorial Office, I shall endeavour, first, to shew how *excellently* he was *fitted* and *accomplished* for it; and secondly, how *fully* and *effectually* he hath *discharged* it. As for the first, how *excellently* he was *fitted* and *accomplished* for this Office, will evidently appear by these Three Considerations.

I. That when he came down to *prophesy* to us, he came *immediately* from the Bosom of the Father: For as he was the *Eternal* Son of God, he was always *with* him from all Eternity, and always *intimate* and infinitely *dear* and *familiar* to him; and therefore, as such, must not only be supposed fully to *comprehend* his *Nature,* and perfectly to *know* his *Will,* but also to be privy to his most secret *Thoughts* and *Counsels.* And it is upon this account, perhaps, chiefly that he is called the *Logos,* or *Word of God*; because, as St. *Gregory Nazianzen* discoursed, *Orat.* 36. he hath the same relation to God the Father, that a *Word* or *inward Thought* hath to the *Mind*; not only in regard of his *Generation* without any *Passion,* but because of his intimate *Conjunction* with him, by which he perfectly *understands* him, and so hath full Power to *declare* him: For, the *Father* is known, saith he, by the *Son,* and the Son is a *brief* and *easy* Demonstration of the Father, as every thing that is begotten is σιωπῶν λόγος, the *silent Word.* of that which begat it. So that as it is the Office of our *Speech* to *declare* our *Minds* to one another, so it is the Office of

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this *Eternal Word* of the Father, to declare his *Mind* and *Will* to the World; and who can be ſo proper to declare the Father's Mind to us, as he who from all Eternity hath been ſo familiar to his inmoſt *Thoughts* and *Purpoſes?* Hence St. *John*, c. i. v. 18. *No Man hath ſeen God at any time, the only begotten Son, who is in the Boſom of the Father, he hath declared him*; and indeed his being in the *Boſom of the Father, i. e.* being moſt *near* and *intimate* to him, did perfectly qualify him to *declare him*: For in that *Nearneſs* and *Intimacy* he could not but have a moſt perfect Knowledge of him; and this not by the *Inſtructions* of *Angels*, nor by *Dreams* or *Viſions*, as other Prophets had; no, nor merely by the *Holy Ghoſt* neither, but by an immediate *perſonal Intuition* of his Father's *Thoughts* and *Purpoſes*, which from all Eternity were expoſed to his *View* and *Proſpect*.

II. It is alſo to be conſidered, that as he came down immediately *from* God, to prophesy to us, ſo he came down into our *own* Nature, which gave a vaſt Advantage to his Miniſtry: For had he preached to *us*, as he did to the *Jews* from Mount *Sinai*, in his Divine Perſon, the Glory and Majeſty thereof would have ſo *amazed* and *confounded* us, that like them we ſhould not have been able to *attend* to him; and our Minds would have been ſo *ſtruck* with the terrible *manner* of his Miniſtry, that we could never have fix'd our Thoughts as we ought upon the *Matter* of it: For ſo the *Jews*, upon God's preaching *perſonally* to them in the proper Equipage of his Divine Majeſty, were ſtruck with ſuch a ſacred *Horror*, as that they were not able to *bear* it; but made it their Requeſt, that they might not hear the *Voice of the Lord* any more; and that for the future, he would ſpeak with them by *Moſes*, whoſe Voice they could more eaſily *bear*, and better *attend* to; which Requeſt of theirs God thought ſo reaſonable, that he promiſes to raiſe up unto them a Prophet of their own Brotherhood, like unto *Moſes*, meaning the *Word incarnate*, and bids them *hearken to him*, Deut. xviii. 15, 16. *i. e.* ſince you cannot *endure* to hear me ſpeaking to you in the *Majeſty* of my *Divinity*, I will hereafter *allay* and *qualify* it, by *aſſuming* one of your own *kind* and *kindred* into *perſonal Union* with it; *in* and *by* whom I will vouchſafe to ſpeak to you in ſuch a *familiar* and *condeſcending* manner, as that you ſhall be able freely to attend without any *Terror* or *Diſturbance*. And indeed, the moſt *natural* way of inſtructing *Human* Minds is by *Human* Means: As for *Voices* from *Heaven*, or from *bright* and *glorious* Appearances on Earth, they are more apt to *confound* than to *edify* our Underſtandings; and therefore for this Reaſon, among others, Chriſt thought meet to aſſume our Natures, that ſo he might treat with us in ſuch a way as is moſt *accommodate* thereunto, and deliver his *Divine* Doctrines to us in a Human *Form* and *Voice*, that ſo being convey'd to us in the moſt *natural* and *familiar* manner, they might not ſo *alarm* our *Dread*, as to confound our *Attention*, but might *inſtruct* our Minds inſtead of *ſcaring* and *amuſing* them. And therefore he did not only *qualify* the *Terror* and *Dreadfulneſs* of his Divine Majeſty, by putting on our Nature; but together with it he put on all the *Condeſcenſions* and *Sweetneſſes* of a moſt *familiar* and *endearing* Converſation, and converſed among Men in ſuch a *generous*, *friendly* and *courteous* manner, as *charm'd* and *enamour'd* all *ingenuous* Minds, and thereby *attracted* their *Attention* to his Doctrine. So that, as Chriſt was the Son of *God*, he perfectly *underſtood* his Father's Will; and as he was the Son of *Man*, he was perfectly fitted to *reveal* and *declare* it to Mankind.

And as by being *God-man*, he was moſt perfectly *accompliſhed* to *declare* God's Will to us, ſo he was alſo to give us a perfect *Example* of *Obedience* to it; which, as I ſhall ſhew hereafter, was a neceſſary part of his *Prophetick* Office: For without aſſuming *Human Nature*, he could never have been an Example of *Human Virtue*, which conſiſts in acting ſuitably to the Nature of a *Man*, who is a Compound of *Spirit* and *Matter*, *Reaſon* and *Senſe*, *Angel* and *Brute*; from which contrary *Principles* there ariſe in him contrary *Inclinations* and *Affections*, in the *good* or *bad* Government whereof all Human *Virtue* and *Vice* conſiſt.

How then could he have practised those Virtues which consist in the Dominion of *spiritual* and *rational* Faculties over *brutal* and *sensitive*, such as *Temperance*, *Chastity*, *Equanimity*, and the like, had he not assumed that Nature which is compounded of *both?* How could he have shewn us by his own Example how to govern the *Passions*, and conduct ourselves in the *Circumstances* of *Men*, had he not communicated with us in the Passions and Circumstances of *Human Nature?* He might have come down from the Heavens to us enrobed with *Splendor* and *Light*, or have preached his Gospel to the World, in the midst of a *Choir of Angels*, from some bright Throne in the Clouds; and it would have been more convenient for *himself* to have done so, because more suitable to the natural *Dignity* and *Majesty* of his Person; but he consulted not so much his *own* Convenience as *ours*; he knew well enough that his Appearance among us in such an illustrious Equipage, would have been more apt to *astonish* than to *instruct* us, to have *amused* our Thoughts into a profound Admiration of his Glories, than to have *directed* our Steps in the Paths of Piety and Virtue; and that it would be much more for *our* Interest, that he should *conduct* us by his *Example*, than *amaze* us by his *Appearance:* And therefore he rather chose to appear to us in our *own* Nature, that so by going before us as a *Man*, he might shew us by his *Example* what became *Men* to do, and *trace* out to us the *way* to our Happiness with the *print* of his own *Footsteps*. So that, his Coming among us in our *own* Nature, was of vast Moment to his *Prophetick* Office, both in *declaring* his Father's *Will* to us, and setting us an Example of *Obedience* to it.

III. And Lastly, It is farther to be considered, that as he came down *immediately* from the Father to *prophesy* to us in our *own Natures*, so while he abode among us, he was *always* endued with the *Holy Ghost*; the *Spirit of the Lord*, from whom all *Prophetick* Inspiration proceeds, *rested* on him, and made its constant *Residence* and *Abode* in his Human Nature. So that, whereas it descended upon other Prophets only at certain *Times* and upon certain *Occasions*, by reason of which it was not in their Power to prophesy when they pleased, but they were fain to attend the *arbitrary* Motions of the Holy Ghost, and, like dead Organ-pipes, were *mute* and *silent*, as oft as he *withdrew*, and *ceased* to *breathe* into them his divine *Enthusiasms*; our blessed Saviour had the Prophetick Influx at *command*, and could prophesy *whensoever* he pleased: For the Holy Ghost *resided* in his Mind, and, like an assisting *Form* or *Genius*, was *always* present with his Understanding, and being, as was shewed before, *subordinate* to him, both by personal *Property* and *Agreement* with the Father, it operated in him *whensoever*, *howsoever*, and *whatsoever* he pleased; and was as intirely at his Disposal, as his own most *voluntary* Motions. So that whensoever he had occasion for a *Revelation*, he no sooner *willed* it, but the Holy Ghost immediately *inspired* it into him; and whensoever he wanted a *Miracle* to confirm a Revelation, he no sooner *called* for it, but the Holy Ghost immediately exerted it by him: For, as I shewed before, he did both *prophesy* end effect his *Miracles* by the Holy Ghost that was in him, and that was so intirely *subject* to him, thro' the *whole* Course of his Ministry, that he could prophesy and do Miracles by him *whensoever* he pleased; and hence he is said to be *anointed with the Holy Ghost and with Power*, Acts x. 38. that is, to be consecrated to the Prophetick Office, by the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon him, by whom he was impowered to *prophesy*, and to *confirm* his Prophecy by *Miracles*; for so it follows, *He went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed with the Devil, for God was with him*; and accordingly at his Baptism he was solemnly *consecrated*, the great Prophet of God, by a visible *Unction* of the Holy Ghost, who, as St. *Luke* tells us, descended on him *in a bodily Form or Appearance*, Chap. iii. ver. 22. which St. *Matthew* thus expresses, *The Spirit of God descended like a Dove, and lighted upon him*, Chap. iii. ver. 16. not as if he descended in the *Form* of a *Dove*; but, as it seems most probable, he assumed a Body of *Light* or *Fire*, and therein came down from above, just as a Dove

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with its Wings ſpread forth is obſerved to do, and gathering about our Saviour's Head crowned it with a *viſible Glory*: For ſo in the *Nazarene* Goſpel, as *Grotius* obſerves, it is ſaid, that upon this Deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, εὐθὺς περιέλαμψε τὸν τόπον φῶς μέγα, *i. e.* there immediately ſhone a great Light round about the Place; and *Juſtin Martyr* tells us, that when Chriſt was Baptized, Πῦρ ἀνήφθη ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ, that there was a Fire lighted in the River *Jordan*; that is, by the Reflexion of that *bright* and *flaming* Appearance, in which the Holy Ghoſt deſcended, the River ſeemed to be all on Fire. So that as God did ſignalize his Preſence in the *Old* Tabernacle by a viſible *Light* or *Glory*; ſo the Holy Ghoſt, by deſcending on our Saviour in this *ſhining* Appearance, declared him to be the *Tabernacle* of his Divine Preſence, wherein he meant from thenceforth to *reſide* and make his conſtant *abode*; and from *whence*, and by *whom*, he would, for the future, communicate himſelf to Mankind. And accordingly the Sign which God gave to *John Baptiſt*, by which he might know the Meſſias when he ſaw him, was this, *Upon whom thou ſhalt ſee the Spirit deſcending and remaining on him, the ſame is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghoſt*, *i. e.* who, from *himſelf*, or from his *own* Fulneſs, ſhall communicate the Holy Ghoſt to the World, *John* i. 33. For ſo *full* was Jeſus of the Holy Ghoſt, that he not only propheſied *himſelf*, and did Miracles by it whenſoever he *pleaſed*, but he alſo communicated it to his own immediate *Diſciples*, and empower'd *them* to communicate it to *others*; and hence it is ſaid, that *God gave not the Spirit by meaſure to him*, John iii. 34. *i. e.* with *Limitations* and *Reſtrictions*, to ſuch particular *Times*, or *Ends* and *Purpoſes*; but in that *unlimited* manner, as that he could not only act by it himſelf *whenſoever* or *howſoever* he pleaſed, but alſo communicate it to others, in what *degree* or *meaſure* ſoever he pleaſed: For ſo *John* xx. 22. it is ſaid, that *he breathed upon his Diſciples, and bad them receive the Holy Ghoſt*; and *Acts* viii. 17. we are told, that upon their *laying their Hands* upon others, *they* alſo *received the Holy Ghoſt*. And by this *unlimited* Fulneſs of the Holy Ghoſt, which our Saviour received at his *Baptiſm*, he was perfectly accompliſhed for his *Prophetick* Office: For the Holy Ghoſt *abode* in him *after* that viſible Glory in which he deſcended *diſappeared*, even throughout the *whole* Courſe of his Miniſtry; and hence, *Luke* iv. 1. we are told, That *being full of the Holy Ghoſt, he returned from* Jordan; and after he had finiſhed his Forty Days Faſt in the Wilderneſs, he returned from thence *in the Power of the Spirit into* Galilee, ver. 14. where, in his own City of *Nazareth*, he began to propheſy, declaring and manifeſting, that *the Spirit of the Lord was upon him*, ver. 18. to 23. And at *Cana* in *Galilee* he began to work Miracles, and thereby to *manifeſt forth his Glory*, John ii. 11. Thus by *Propheſying*, and confirming his Prophecies by *Miracles*, he exerted that *Fulneſs* of the Holy Ghoſt which was communicated to him at his Baptiſm. And now, ſince *before* he came down to propheſy to us, he was from Eternity in the Boſom of the Father; and ſince *when* he came down he was clothed in *Human* Nature, and in that Nature was inſpired, with ſuch an *unbounded* Fulneſs of the Holy Ghoſt, as that he could not only propheſy *himſelf*, and confirm his Prophecies by *Miracles*, when he pleaſed, but alſo communicate theſe his Gifts to *others*, in what *Meaſures* and *Proportions* he thought fit, to enable them to propheſy for him, whereſoever he thought meet to ſend them, what can we imagine farther neceſſary to *compleat* and *accompliſh* him for the *Prophetick* Office?

I proceed therefore in the next place to ſhew how *thoroughly* and *effectually* he diſcharged this Office; which will plainly appear, by conſidering briefly what thoſe Things were, which, as a *Prophet* he performed; all which are reducible to theſe Six Heads.

Firſt, He made a full *Declaration* of his Father's *Will* to the World.

Secondly, He *proved* and *confirmed* what he had declared, by *Miracles*.

Thirdly, He gave a perfect *Example* of *Obedience* to what he had declared and proved to be his Father's Will.

Fourthly, He *sealed* his Declaration with his *own Blood.*

Fifthly, He *instituted* an *Order* of Men to *preach* what he had declared to the World.

Sixthly, He sent his *Holy Spirit*, when he left the World, to *recollect* and *explain* to those Men what he had declared, and to enable *them* also to *prove* and *assert* it by *Miracles.*

I. He made a full *Declaration* of his Father's Will to the World, *viz.* in those *Sermons, Parables,* and *Discourses* of his, which we find recorded in the Four *Evangelists,* in which the *whole* Will of God concerning the *Way* and *Method* of our Salvation, is *fully* and *perfectly* revealed: For thus St. *Paul* declares to the Elders of the Church of *Ephesus,* that *he had kept back nothing that was profitable for them, but had testified both to the* Jews *and* Greeks, *Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ,* Acts xx. 20, 21. and ver. 27. he tells them, that *he had not shunned to declare unto them all the Counsel of God.* Now it is certain, that this *whole Counsel of God,* which he had preached, was only that account of our Saviour's *Discourses* and *Actions* which St. *Luke* gives us in his Gospel, who, as *Irenæus* tells us, was a Follower of St. *Paul,* and did compile into one Book that *History* of our Saviour's *Life* and *Doctrine* which St. *Paul* had *taught* and *delivered*: And if so, then *the whole Counsel of God* must be contained in this Gospel: And accordingly St. *Luke* tells his *Theophilus* in the Beginning of his Gospel, *That forasmuch as many had set forth a Declaration of those Things that were surely believed among Christians, it seemed good unto him also, having had a perfect understanding of all Things from the first, to write them down in order, that he might know the Certainty of those Things wherein he had been instructed*: From whence I infer, that, supposing that St. *Luke performed* what he *promised,* his Gospel must contain a full Declaration of the *Christian Religion*: For, first, by promising to give an Account of those Things that were *surely believed* among Christians, he engaged himself to give an intire Account of *Christianity*; unless we will suppose that there were some Parts of Christianity, which the Christians of that Time did not *surely believe.* Secondly, in promising to give an Account of those Things of which he had *perfect Understanding from the first,* and in which his *Theophilus* had *been instructed,* he also engaged himself to give a *compleat* Account of the *whole* Religion, unless we will suppose that there were *some* Parts of this Religion which St. *Luke* did not *perfectly understand,* and in which *Theophilus* had not been before *instructed.* And the same may be said of the Three other Evangelists, *viz.* that their Gospels do severally contain *all* the *necessary* Articles of Christianity; tho the *last* of them seems to have been written upon a more *particular* Design, *viz.* more *fully* to *explain,* than any of the former Evangelists had done, the Article of the *Divinity* and *eternal Generation* of Jesus Christ the Son of God. And if the *Whole* of Religion be contained in these Gospels, which are only *Histories* of our Saviour's *Preaching* and *Actions,* then it cannot be denied but that he made a *full* Revelation of God's Will to the World. It is true, there are sundry *other* Divine Writings annexed to these Gospels, which, together with them, *compleat* the New Testament, *viz.* the *Acts* and *Epistles* of the Apostles; but these pretend not to declare any new Religion to the World: For as for the *Acts of the Apostles,* it is only an *Historical* Account of the *Preparations* of Christ's *Ministers* for the preaching that Gospel to the World which *he* had taught them; and of the *Way* and *Method* of their Procedure in it, in despite of all those Oppositions they met with. And as for the *Epistles,* they are partly *Comments* and *Enlargements* on our Saviour's *Actions* and *Discourses*; and partly *Decisions* of such *Controversies* as arose among them, according to the *Analogy* of that *Faith,* which our Saviour had before *declared* and *revealed*; but in all these Writings there is no *one* Article of Faith but what was *before* declared and defined in the *Sermons* and *Discourses* of our Saviour. And then as for the *Primitive Writers,* who lived *in* or *near* the Apostolical Age, and upon that Account had much greater Advantages of un-

derstanding the Truths of Christianity than we, who live at this *remote* Distance; they are at best but genuine *Commentators* on that Doctrine which our Saviour *first* taught, and his Apostles *afterwards* more fully explained to the World; but as for declaring any *new* Doctrines, or defining *new* Articles of Faith, that is an upstart invasion of Christ's *Prophetick* Office, which they never so much as pretended to. So that the Prophecy of our Saviour is the *Fountain* from whence all Christian Truth is *derived*, as containing in it a *compleat* and *intire* Sum of God's *Will* and *Counsel*, concerning the Salvation of Mankind.

II. As he taught the *whole* Will of God, so he *prov'd* that what he taught was the Will of God, by sundry miraculous Operations, which are the great Evidences by which God always demonstrated the Truth of his Divine Revelations, and which of all others are the most *popular*, *easy* and *convincing* Proofs that can be given of them. For as for the *Prophets* themselves, they might be very well assur'd, that their *Enthusiasms* were *Divine*, by the *vehement* Impressions they made on their Minds, which were such as did as fully satisfy *them*, that they were from God, as the strokes of the Sun-beams on our Eyes do us, that it is Day at Noon: but no *other* Man could be satisfied, that what they spoke was by Divine Inspiration, without either being divinely inspired *himself*, or confirmed by *them* in the belief of it by some *miraculous* Sign of the Divine Power; which *latter* was the way by which the Prophets of Old did *ordinarily* confirm their Doctrines, when they delivered any thing *new* to the World. And accordingly, tho our Saviour had all along sufficiently *confirmed* his Doctrines to the *Jews*, by the Authorities of the *Old* Testament, yet this Confirmation of his Miracles he more particularly *insists* on and appeals to; thus *John* x. 25. *The Works*, saith he, *that I do in my Father's Name, they testify of me*; and again, ver. 37, 38. *If I do not the Works of my Father, believe me not: but if I do, tho ye believe not me, believe the Works.* And herein he places the inexcusable Sin of their *unbelief*, that they persisted in it, notwithstanding he had done among them *the works which none other Man did*, John xv. 24. And indeed well he might, considering the *miraculous* Powers he exerted among them; for how often did he, even before their Eyes, *subpœna* in whatsoever was in *Heaven* or *Earth* or *Sea*, to give their Testimony to his Doctrine. He made the *Angels* minister to him, and the Devils tremble and fly before him, and the *Plants* and *Animals*, the *Winds* and *Seas* obeyed him, and *Health* and *Sickness*, and *Life* and *Death*, and the *Grave*, did by their *obedience* to his *Word*, bear *witness* to the *Truth* of his *Doctrine*. By his powerful Voice, he *shook* the *Heavens*, and sent down the *Holy Spirit* on his Followers; he tore the *Rocks*, and open'd the *Graves*; and, at his Command, the *Bodies* of his Saints *arose*; and, which was more miraculous than all, he raised himself the Third Day after his *Crucifixion*, and having *finished* his *Course* upon *Earth*, *ascended* Triumphantly into *Heaven*, in the View of a *numerous* Assembly of *Spectators*. All which were such *illustrious* Demonstrations of his being *inspired* by God, as nothing but an *incurable* Infidelity could ever be able to *withstand*. But what *proper* Arguments these *Miracles* of his were to convince Men, and what *evidence* there is of the *Truth* and *Reality* of them, will be shewn at large *hereafter*, and therefore it will be needless at present to insist any farther on this particular.

III. Therefore, as a Prophet, he gave us a perfect *Example* of *Obedience* to that which he had *declared* and *proved* to be his Father's Will. He did not only reveal his Father's Will to Mens *Ears* in his excellent *Sermons* and *Discourses*; but he also set it forth before their *Eyes*, in the glorious *Example* of his *Actions*. For what he *taught* in *Words*, he *exemplified* in *Deeds*, and his *Conversation* was a *lively* Picture of his *Doctrine*, wherein all that *Humility* and *Self-denial*, that *Temperance* and *Justice*, that *Charity* and *Heavenly-mindedness*, that invincible *Constancy* of *Mind*, and generous *Contempt* of the *World*, which he taught Mankind, were drawn to the *Life*, and expressed in their *fairest* Colours and Proportions. So that what he taught in *Words* he taught over

again in *Actions*, and explained his *Rules* still by his own *Example*: For his *Conversation* was all along a most genuine *Comment* and *Paraphrase* on his Religion; by casting their Eyes on which, those who did not fully understand the sense of his *Precepts* by his *Words*, might very easily *expound* it by his *Actions*. For there is no doubt but a good *Example* doth far more effectually instruct, than good *Precepts*; because it doth not only *express* the same Virtues that the Precepts *injoyn*, but also expresses them with much more *Grace* and *Emphasis*. For whereas *Precepts* and *Discourses* of Virtue, are only the *dead* Pictures and *artificial* Landskips and Descriptions of it, a virtuous *Example* is Virtue *itself*, *informed* and *animated*, *alive* and *in motion*, *exerting* and *exhibiting* itself in all its natural *Charms* and *Graces*. And therefore, as we know a Man much better when we see himself *alive* and *in action*, than when we only see his *Picture*; so we understand Virtue much better, when we see it *living* and *acting* in a good *Example*, than when we only behold it *described* and *pictured* in virtuous *Precepts* and *Discourses*. So that by giving us a *compleat* and *perfect* Example of *Piety* and *Virtue*, the blessed Jesus hath far more *effectually* instructed us in our Duty, than by all those Heavenly *Sermons* which he preached to the World; because his whole Life was nothing else but a continued Series of *living* and *moving* Virtue, or rather, it was nothing but Piety and Virtue *acting* their several *Parts* in their own proper *Forms*, and *exhibiting* themselves to the *Eyes* of Men in all their natural *Graces*. And as the Holiness of his Life, did most effectually *instruct* Men in their Duty, so it could not but very much *confirm* them in the Truth of his Doctrine; for it is certain, if his Doctrine were *false*, it was not a simple *Error*, but a downright *Lye*, *i. e.* a *known* and *wilful* Falshood; because it depended, as I shall shew by and by, upon Matters *of Fact*, which he could not but know whether they were *true* or *false*. So that, if these Facts were *false*, he was a *wilful* Deceiver in affirming them, and building his Doctrines upon them. But how could he be reasonably suspected of *lying*, whose whole Life was such an illustrious Example of *Goodness*, and unspotted *Integrity* of Manners? For, it is to serve either their *Covetousness* or *Ambition*, their *Envy* or their *Revenge*, that Men turn *wilful* Deceivers; *none* of which Vices, nor so much as the least *appearance* of them, are visible in the Life of *Jesus*, but their *contraries* continually *shone* thro' the whole course of this Actions; and if none of those Vices ever appeared in him, that could any way *tempt* him to *lye* and *deceive*, it is not only *unjust* but *unreasonable* to suspect him. Thus by the Sanctity of his Life, he not only *instructed* Men in his Father's *Will*, but also *confirmed* them in the *belief* of it.

IV. As a Prophet also he *sealed* his Doctrine with his *Blood*, which is the highest Pledge that any Mortal can give of his *Truth* and *Integrity*. While he was *preaching* his Doctrine to the World, he foresaw all-along that he must either *recant* it or *die* for it; and therefore it is not imaginable, that he would have proceeded to divulge it, had he not believ'd it to be *true*. For, what Man in his Wits would ever publish a *lye* to the World, when he knows before-hand, he must either *recant* it with *Shame*, or *assert* and *maintain* it with his *Blood*? But such was the Nature of his Doctrine, that he could not *believe* it to be *True*, unless it were so; because the *Truth* or *Falshood* of it depended upon Matters of *Fact*, wherein he could not be *deceived*, namely, that he was the *Son of God*, that he *came* down from him, and had *dwelt* with him in unspeakable Glory and Happiness from the Foundations of the World, *John* xvii. 5. upon the *Truth* of which *Facts* depended the *Authority* of his whole *Doctrine*; but whether these were *true* or *false*, he could not be ignorant, if he were in his Wits, which no body can doubt, that considers the *exactness* of his *Conversation*, and the *wisdom* and *dependence* of his *Doctrine*. Now, if he were first in Heaven, and was sent down from *thence* to preach to the World, there is no doubt to be made of the *Truth* of his *Doctrine*; and whether he were or no, *he* could not be ignorant; if he were not there, he

not only died with a *wilful* Lye in his Mouth, which is not reasonably imaginable of a Person of his *unspotted* Piety and Virtue, but he also published it to the World in his Life, notwithstanding he *knew* it to be a Lye, and foresaw he must either *die* for it, or shamefully *recant* it, which is not imaginable of a Person of his *Wisdom* and *soundness* of *Mind*. So that considering that he could not but *certainly* know whether his Doctrine were *True* or *False*, his sealing it with his Blood, is an *unanswerable* Attestation of the *Truth* of it; and accordingly his *Blood* is made a great Testimony of the *Truth* of his Gospel, 1 *John* v. 8. and St. *Paul* tells *us*, that *he witnessed a good Confession before Pontius Pilate*, 1 Tim. vi. 13. that is, in affirming before *Pilate*, that he was the *Son of God*, and *King of the Jews*; even when he certainly foresaw that he should forfeit his *Life* by it, he took it upon his *Death*, that he had preached nothing but the *Truth* to the World.

V. As a Prophet he also instituted an *Order* of Men, to *publish* and *declare* his Doctrine to the World. Whilst the Gift of Prophecy continued in the *Jewish Church*, there were certain Schools called the *Schools of the Prophets*, in which Men were trained up under some *great* and *eminent* Prophets, who were the Masters of those Schools, in the *knowledge* of Divine Things, and the *practice* of Piety and Virtue; that so being educated in *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, they might be the better *disposed* and *qualified* to receive the Prophetick *Influx*, and deliver God's Messages to the People. For out of these Schools God *ordinarily* called those Persons whom he *imployed* and *sent forth* to prophesy to their *Kings* and *People*; and accordingly our Saviour, when he began to *revive* the Spirit of Prophecy in his *own* Person, (which, from *Malachi* till then, which was for the space of Four Hundred Years, had been utterly *extinct*) immediately erected a *School of Prophets*, consisting of his Twelve *Apostles* and Seventy *Disciples*, to whom, as it seems, he afterwards added Thirty-eight more, *Vide Acts* i. 15. over whom he himself *presided* as the great *Master-Prophet*, in order to the *instructing* their *Minds* in all Divine Wisdom, and *forming* their *Manners* by the strictest Rules of Piety and Virtue; that so, whenever occasion required, they might be duly qualified to *prophesy* to the World. And accordingly, as those antient Masters of the *Prophetick Schools* had ordinarily their Scholars *personally* attending on them, and, upon emergent Occasions, did frequently *send* them forth as their *Ministers* upon Prophetick *Messages*, *Vide* 2 *Kings* ix. 1. and 1 *Kings* xx. 35. so our blessed Saviour kept his in ordinary *attendance* about him, that so they might *hear* his Doctrine, and *see* his Miracles, and *observe* his Conversation; and upon particular Occasions, he *sent* them forth as his *Ministring Disciples* to prophesy in his Name, *Vide Luke* x. 1. And out of this *Prophetick School* of our Saviour, the *Primitive* Prophets of our Religion were *called* and *sent* forth to preach the Gospel thro' the World. For that his Gospel might be taught thro' all *succeeding* Ages to the end of the World, he *first* erected this *sacred School*, and when he was to *leave* it, he deposited a standing *Commission* in the Hands of his Twelve Apostles, whom he ordained to *preside* in it in his room, by which he impowered them, not only to *ordain* and *send* forth the present Disciples of it, *viz.* the *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, to *teach* his Gospel to all Nations; but also to *derive* down the same Authority to their Successors thro' all Generations to come; *For as the Father hath sent me*, saith he, *so send I you*, John xx. 21. and as *he* sent *them*, so they still sent *others*, and so in an *uninterrupted* Line of *Succession*, hath this Commission been *handed* and *derived* from one Generation to another; the *Bishops* who next succeeded the Apostles in presiding over the *Sacred School*, not only still ordaining *other* Bishops to succeed them, but also still admitting *other* Presbyters and Deacons, who are as the *Disciples* of that School to *minister* under them in the Propagation of the Gospel. Thus Christ, as the Great *Prophet* of the Church, hath erected a *standing* Prophetick *School* or *Order* of Men authoritatively to *teach* and *declare* his Gospel to all succeeding Ages of the World.

VI. And

VI. And Laſtly, As he was a Prophet, he alſo ſent his *Holy Spirit*, when he left the World, to *recollect* and *explain* to his Diſciples the Doctrine he had taught them, and to enable them alſo to *prove* and *aſſert* it by *Miracles*. For, as *Elias*, the Great Prophet of *Iſrael*, when he was *ſnatched up* into Heaven, let drop his Mantle, and, with that, derived that Holy Spirit on his Diſciple *Eliſha*, by which he propheſied and wrought his Miracles; ſo *Jeſus*, the Great Prophet of the World, when he *aſcended* into Heaven, derived *that* Divine Spirit upon his Apoſtles and Diſciples, by which he himſelf propheſied, and *confirmed* his Prophecies by *miraculous* Evidences, while he was upon Earth, *Vide Supra*, p. 351, 352, &c. For in all likelihood, the Holy Ghoſt deſcended, on the Day of *Pentecoſt*, not only on the *Apoſtles*, but alſo upon all the reſt of the Hundred and Twenty *Diſciples*, of whom we read in *Acts* i. 15. For of theſe conſiſted the *Prophetick School* of our Saviour, who, in all probability, ſeparated them, while he was yet upon Earth, from the *reſt* of his Followers, to be the *Heralds* and *Preachers* of his Goſpel to the World: And if ſo, we may reaſonably conclude, that the Holy Ghoſt fell on them *all*, as well as on the Apoſtles, to qualify *them* for that work, which, together with the Apoſtles, they had been *fore-ordained* to. Indeed as the Apoſtles were placed in a higher ſtation than any of the *reſt*, as being authorized by Chriſt to *ſuper-intend* and *preſide* over them, ſo they received a *peculiar* Gift of the Holy Ghoſt, in which none of the reſt *communicated* with them; and that was conferring, by *Impoſition of Hands*, the Holy Ghoſt upon others. For ſo, in *Acts* viii. we find that when *Philip* had converted the People of *Samaria*, he could not confer the Holy Ghoſt on them, but *Peter* and *John* are *ſent* thither for that purpoſe; who *laid their Hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghoſt*, verſe 17. Now by thus deriving his Holy Spirit on his *Apoſtles* and *Diſciples*, the bleſſed *Jeſus* ſtill proceeded *by them* to *propheſy* to the World, till, thro' *their* Miniſtry, he had fully *conſummated* his Prophetick Office, and *revealed* and *explained* the *whole* Doctrine of the Goſpel. For till ſuch Time as the whole New Teſtament was *compleat*, his Miniſters generally preached by the immediate *Inſpiration* of the *Holy Ghoſt*, who, as I have ſhewn at large, *p.* 351, &c. not only recollected to their *Memories* thoſe Doctrines which Chriſt himſelf had taught them, but alſo *explained* them fully to their *Minds*, and thereby enabled them to explain them fully to the World; and when this was once *finiſhed*, and the whole Doctrine of the Goſpel committed to *Writing*, and *collected* into a *Volume*, the Spirit of Prophecy was *withdrawn* from the Miniſters of Chriſtianity; who were, from thenceforth, obliged to ſupply the want of it, by their own *Study* and *Induſtry*. For now the Goſpel being *fully* revealed, there needed no farther Revelation; and for the Holy Spirit to reveal over *again* to Mens Minds what he had plainly enough revealed *already*, and ſet before their Eyes, would have been but *actum agere*, to multiply Actions to no purpoſe. Whilſt the Goſpel lay hid in the Eternal *Counſel* of God, out of the *reach* and *proſpect* of Human Underſtandings, it was neceſſary that the *Holy Ghoſt* ſhould *immediately* reveal it to the Minds of *thoſe* who were to declare it to the World; otherwiſe it is impoſſible it ſhould ever have been *known* to Mankind; but when once he had fully *revealed* it to them, and *declared* it by them, and tranſmitted their Declaration by a *ſtanding Scripture* to all ſucceeding Generations; to what end ſhould he *ſtill* proceed to make new Revelations of it, unleſs it were to gratify Mens *ſloth* and *idleneſs*, and excuſe them from the trouble of *ſearching* and *ſtudying* that Scripture in which he had taken care to *tranſmit* his Goſpel to them? But tho that bleſſed Spirit hath never been wanting to Mankind in any *neceſſary* aſſiſtance, yet when once he hath put Things within our *own* power, he always expects that we ſhould do them, and not ſit ſtill with our Hands in our Pockets, expecting that *he* ſhould do them for us. Since therefore by tranſmitting to us the *Scripture*, he hath put it within the *power* of its Miniſters to *underſtand* and *teach* the Goſpel, he expects that they ſhould

exercise that power in a diligent *study* of those Things which lead to the true understanding of Religion, and not depend upon new Revelations for the understanding of that which he hath already *sufficiently* revealed to them. For thus, till the whole *Old Testament* was finished, God continued the *Spirit of Prophecy* in the *Jewish* Church, after which he immediately *withdrew* it, and wholly remitted his People to the conduct of the *Priests* and *Levites*; who in their Forty-eight *Cities*, which were so many *Universities* for their Education in Divine Learning, diligently *read* and *studied* the Law, and thereby accomplished themselves to *preach* and *explain* it to the People. And in like manner God continued the *same* Spirit of Prophecy in the *Christian* Church, till the whole *New Testament* was *revealed* and *written*, and *Copies* of it *dispersed* thro' all the Churches; and from thenceforth the Spirit of Prophecy *ceased*, and in the room of its first *inspired* Ministers, there succeeded an *ordinary standing* Ministry, who, by their *Learning* and *Industry*, and diligent *search* of Scripture, were to supply the defect of immediate *Revelation*, and qualify themselves to *teach* and *instruct* the several Flocks that were committed to their Charge. In short, therefore, the *Spirit of Prophecy* remained upon the Ministers of Christ, till such Time as it had fully revealed and clearly explained the Gospel to them, and when this was done, and they had *transmitted* its *Revelations* to writing, there could be no farther need of it, unless it be supposed either that he had not *sufficiently* revealed the Gospel to them, or that he hath some *new* Gospel to reveal. And thus you see what it is, that our Saviour had done in the discharge of his *Prophetick* Office. And considering all, I know not what farther he could have added to *compleat* and *perfect* it, and to render his Prophecy *effectual* to *teach* and *instruct* the World. So that, if after all these *mighty* Performances, we still remain in *darkness* and *ignorance*, the *blame* of it wholly redounds upon *ourselves*; for *he* hath in all respects *abundantly* performed his part towards the *enlightning* of the World, and chalked out to us the *way* to our Happiness with such *plain* and *visible* Lines, that if we are but *willing* to *walk* in it, we cannot mistake or wander from it; but if we will be so *supine* and *negligent*, as to concern ourselves no more about it, than if it were only a *Fanciful* Description of the *Road* to *Utopia*, or the *Highway* to the *World* in the *Moon*, it is impossible we should be *thorowly* acquainted with it, how plainly soever it is described. It is true, there are some Doctrines in Christianity, which are not so clearly revealed, but that the most *honest* Minds may be *mistaken* about them; but then *these are such*, as are far remote from the *necessary* and *fundamental* Articles, upon which our Salvation depends, all which are so *clearly* and *distinctly* revealed, that there is nothing but a *perverse* Will, that is either *prejudiced* against them by some *sinful* Affection, or thro' a *profane* disregard of God and Religion, utterly *unconcerned* about them, can hinder Men from apprehending them; and if, when the Divine *Light* shines so *clearly* round about them, Men will be so obstinate as to *shut* their *Eyes* against it, it is at their own *eternal* Peril; and they are as justly accountable for their *Ignorance*, as if they had sinned against the clearest *Knowledge*. For *this*, saith our Saviour, *John* iii. 19. *is the Condemnation of the World, that Light is come into the World, and Men love Darkness rather than Light.* If therefore, thro' any wicked *prejudice* against the Truth, or thro' a profane *neglect* to inquire after it, we continue *ignorant* of it, this will be no Excuse at all for our sinning *against* it; but we shall be as certainly condemned for our *affecting* Ignorance, and *loving Darkness more than Light*, as if we had sinned against the clearest *Light* and *Conviction*. For what a monstrous Instance is it, of *Stupidity* and *Impiety* together, to shut our Eyes against *that* Light which is of such infinite *Moment* to us, and which the Son of God thought worth his while to come down from Heaven to *reveal* to us; what is this, but to tell him to his Face, that if he had pleased, he might have spared his *Pains*, and not have come so *far* on such an *impertinent* Errand, as is not worth a Man's while to *listen* to?

to? O prodigious *Supineness* and *Stupidity!* that Men who are so *inquisitive* about the *little* Affairs of this Life, as that when they receive but a Letter in which they imagine any of their *Worldly* Interests are concern'd, they cannot *forbear* one moment *breaking* it *open* and *perusing* the Contents of it, should yet receive a Message from the *God of Heaven* by his *own Son*, in which their *everlasting* Happiness or Misery is concerned, and take no notice of it; but let it lie by them Day after Day, without ever *inquiring* into the Contents of it, or taking the least *Care* and *Pains* to inform themselves about it. Good God! what *reverence* have these wretched Creatures for *thee*, or what *regard* for themselves, that can thus receive *thy* Messages, and with them their *own* Eternal Fate, with the same *unconcern* and *indifferency*, as they would the most impertinent Tales of *Bedlam?* Wherefore, as we regard either *God* or our *own* Souls, let us from henceforth be persuaded seriously to attend to this *great* and *momentous* Revelation of our Saviour, and thorowly to *inform* our Minds with its *Doctrines* and *Precepts*; for which end let us avoid, as much as in us lies, *busying* and *entertaining* our Thoughts with *nice* and *curious Speculations*, or *remote* and *disputable Opinions*; and betake ourselves to the Study of Things upon which our Eternal Life and Happiness depends, *viz.* of the *Duties* which the Gospel *exacts* and *requires* of us, and of the Motives by which it *presses* and *enforces* them; which when once we have digested into a *clear* and *distinct* Scheme of Practical Knowledge, that will be a *standing* Light to our *Wills* and *Affections*, by which we shall always *see* our *way* before us, and be secured from *wandering* into dangerous *Errors*, and at length safely conducted to eternal *Light* and *Happiness*.

SECT. III.

Of Christ's Priestly *Office.*

IN treating of which *great* and *momentous* Argument, I shall endeavour First, To shew what the *antient* Priesthood was, and in what *Acts* it consisted. Secondly, To prove that the antient Priesthood in its proper Acts was a *Type* and *Figure* of the Priesthood of our Saviour. Thirdly, To explain the Priesthood, and Priestly Acts of our Saviour, *corresponding* to that *antient* Priesthood, in which they were prefigured.

First, What the antient Priesthood *was*, and in what *Acts* it consisted. In the first Ages of the World, it is evident, that in Matters which concerned *himself* alone, every Man was his *own* Priest. For thus in *sacrificing* to God upon their own *particular* Accounts, both *Cain* and *Abel* officiated for themselves, but in *Family-Sacrifices*, the *Father* of the Family was the *Priest*, as is evident by *Noah* and *Job*, *Gen.* viii. 22. *Job* i. 5. And when Families were multiplied into *Tribes* and greater *Societies*, the *Prince* of each Society was also the Supreme *Priest* of it; and hence, before *Aaron* was consecrated, *Moses*, who was the *Prince* of *Israel*, officiated also as the *Priest* in that solemn Sacrifice by which the Covenant with *Israel* was confirmed, *Exod.* xxiv. 6. And long before *Moses*, *Melchisedeck*, King of *Salem*, was also *Priest of the most High God*, Gen. xiv. 18., And it is evident, that originally *Kings* were the *High-Priests* of their Countries. For so *Aristotle* observes, that μοναρχεῖν καὶ ἱερατεύειν, to *Rule* and *Sacrifice* were Offices conjoined in the same Person, *Polit. l.* 3. So also *Virgil*, *Æn.* 3.

Rex Anius, Rex idem hominum, Phœbiq; Sacerdos,

i. e. *Anius*, in the same Person was King of Men, and Priest of *Phœbus*; upon which *Servius* hath this Note, *Sane majorum hæc erat consuetudo, ut* Rex *esset etiam* Sacerdos *vel* Pontifex; It was a Custom among the Antients, that the *King* should be also *Priest* or *High-Priest*. Which Custom was continued for a long while in *Ægypt*, and from thence was derived to the *Greeks*, and

and from them to the *Romans*; for so *Plut. Quæst. Rom.* p. 279. tells us. Τὸ παλαιὸν οἱ βασιλεῖς τὰ πλεῖστα καὶ μέγιστα τῶν ἱερῶν ἔδρων, καὶ τὰς θυσίας ἔθυον αὐτοὶ μετὰ τῶν ἱερέων, ἐπεὶ δὲ οὐκ ἐμετρίαζον, ἀλλ' ἦσαν ὑπερήφανοι καὶ βαρεῖς, τῶν μὲν Ἑλλήνων οἱ πλεῖστοι τὴν ἐξουσίαν αὐτῶν περιελόμενοι, μόνον τὸ θύειν τοῖς θεοῖς ἀπέλιπον, *i. e.* Of old Kings performed the most and greatest Parts of the Sacred Rites, and, together with the Priests, sacrificed the Victims; but upon their exceeding their due Bounds, and taking upon them to domineer proudly and unjustly, many of the *Greeks* took from them all their Civil Power, and only left them their Authority to sacrifice to the Gods: But the *Romans*, as he goes on, utterly rejecting their Kings, appointed another to succeed them in the High Priesthood, whom they wholly debarred from intermeddling with Secular Affairs. *Dionysius Halicarn.* speaking of the Power of Kings, expresly tells us, πρῶτον μὲν ἱερῶν καὶ θυσιῶν ἡγεμονίαν ἔχειν, καὶ πάντα δι' ἐκείνου πράττεσθαι τὰ πρὸς θεοὺς ὅσια, *i. e.* That they had the Government of all Sacrifices and Sacred Rites, and whatsoever was to be done to the holy Gods was done by them. And therefore the reason why *Melchisedeck* here is more particularly taken notice of under the Character of a *King* and *Priest*, was not because there was no *other* Kings so but *he*, but perhaps because all other Kings that were contemporary to him, were revolted to *Idolatry*, so that he only remained a *Priest* of the most *High God*. And in being a *King* and *Priest* together, he was a Type of our Saviour, who was a *Priest*, not after the Order of *Aaron*, but after the Order of *Melchisedeck*, *Heb.* v. 10. For in *Aaron* the *Priestly* Office was *separated* from the *Kingly*, which latter remained in *Moses*, after he by the command of God had *devolved* the Priesthood, which was *originally* in himself, upon his Brother *Aaron*; and so according to Divine Institution, the *Priesthood* was to continue in the Family of *Aaron*, separate from the *Regal* Power, till the coming of our Saviour, who re-united those Offices in *himself*; and became a *Royal Priest* after the antient Order of *Melchisedeck*. For, upon the Separation of these Offices, none could be a Priest of the *Aaronical* Order, but such as were descended from the Family of *Aaron*; and therefore Christ could not be a Priest of that Order, because he descended from the Family of *Judah*; and, being of the *Royal* Lineage, he resumed the *Priestly* Office from the House of *Aaron*, and joined it to the *Kingly* Office again, with which it was *originally* united; by which he abrogated the Priesthood of the *Aaronical* Order, and in its room restored the antient *Melchisedecan* or *Royal* Priestood. And hence the Author to the *Hebrews* observes, that Christ *pertaineth to another Tribe, of which no Man gave attendance at the Altar; for it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah, of which Tribe Moses spake nothing concerning the Priesthood*, Heb. vii. 13, 14. and therefore by being a Priest of a *different* Tribe from that to which the *Aaronical* Order was confined, he disannulled *that* Order, and erected *another* in the room of it, *viz.* the antient Order of *Melchisedeck*, which was *before* the *Aaronical*. Hence St. *Ambrose in Loc. Et quomodo translatum est Sacerdotium? Ex tribu ad tribum, de* Sacerdotali *ad* Regalem, *ut eadem ipsa sit* Regalis & Sacerdotalis; *& intuere mysterium, primum fuit* Regale *Sacerdotium Melchisedech, secundum consequentiam hujus sermonis; secundum etiam fuit* Sacerdotale *in Aaron; tertium in Christo fuit iterum* Regale, *i. e.* How was the Priesthood translated? Why, from one Tribe to another, *viz.* from the Sacerdotal to the Regal, that so it might be both Regal and Sacerdotal; and this is the Mystery; the first Priesthood of *Melchisedeck* was *Regal*; the Second was *Sacerdotal* in *Aaron*; the Third was *Regal* again in Christ. For that which distinguished the *Melchisedecan* from the *Aaronical* Priesthood, was not, as some imagine, the difference of their *Sacrifice*, *viz.* that *Melchisedeck* sacrificed only *inanimate* Things, whereas *Aaron* sacrificed *Animals* also; for, that *Melchisedeck sacrificed*, there is no doubt, because he was Priest of the most High God, but that he sacrificed *inanimate* Things only, such as *Bread* and *Wine*, there is not the least intimation in Scripture; only it is said, that when he met *Abraham*, *he brought forth*

Bread

Bread and Wine, Gen. xiv. 18. that is, to refresh *Abraham*'s Soldiers after their Battle with *Chedorlaomer*, as the manner was in those Countries, *Vide Deut.* xxiii. 4. and *Judg.* viii. 15. and vi. 15. And what is all this to his *Sacrificing?* But, that he sacrificed *Animate* as well as *Inanimate* Things, is evident, not only because Animal Sacrifices were generally used *before* the Institution of the *Aaronical* Priesthood, and it is very improbable that he, who was so eminently the Priest of the most High God, should never offer the accustomed Sacrifices; but also because Christ's Sacrifice was an *animate* one, who was a Priest after *Melchisedeck*'s Order, and not of the Order of *Aaron*, *Heb.* vii. 11. So that if the difference between these Two Orders consisted in this difference of their *Sacrifice*, Christ must be rather a Priest of the *Aaronick* than the *Melchisedecan* Order. And how could the Acts of the Priesthood of *Aaron* be *Typical* of our *Saviour*'s, which is *Melchisedecan*, as the Scripture all along makes them, if they were of a *different* Nature from those of *Melchisedeck?* How could *Aaron*'s *bloody* Sacrifices be Typical of our Saviour's Priesthood which was after the Order of *Melchisedeck*, if *Melchisedeck*'s Priesthood admitted *no* bloody Sacrifice? As to the *Acts* of their Priesthood therefore, for any Thing that appears to the contrary, these Two Orders were the same, but in *this* they apparently differed, that whereas the *Regal* Power was *united* to *Melchisedeck*'s Priesthood, it was wholly *separated* from *Aaron*'s, who, in all probability, was the first *High Priest* in the World, that was not a *King* as well as a *Priest*. The Priestly Acts therefore of these Two different Orders being the same, we shall better understand the Nature of our *Saviour*'s Priesthood, tho it be of the Order of *Melchisedeck*, by the account we have of the *Aaronical*, than by that of the *Melchisedecan* Order; because the *former* is far more *distinct* and *particular* than the *latter*. For of the *Acts* and *Functions* of *Melchisedeck*'s Priesthood there is very *little* mention in *Scripture*, whereas those of *Aaron*'s are described *at large* in all their particular *Rites* and *Circumstances*. The *Priestly* Office therefore in general consists in officiating *for* sinful *Men* with God, in order to the *reconciling* of God to them, and obtaining for them his *Favour* and *Benediction*. To which End there are Two Offices necessary to be performed; First, To offer *Sacrifice* for them, and thereby to make some fitting *Reparation* to God for their past *Sins* and *Provocations*; Secondly, To *present* that Sacrifice to God, and in the *Virtue* and *Merit* of it to *interceed* with God in their behalf, in order to the *Restoring* them to his *Grace* and *Favour*. And accordingly we read of the *Jewish* High-Priest, who of all their other Priests was the most perfect *Type* and *Representative* of Christ in his *Priestly* Office; and this more especially in celebrating the Mysteries of the great Day of *Expiation*, that on this Day he was appointed to bring the Beast to the Door of the Tabernacle, which was set apart to *die* for the *Sins* of the *People*, and to *kill* it there with *his own* Hands; by which Action he did, as the *Peoples Representative*, offer a *Life* to God, as a *Reparation* for those manifold Sins, by which they had justly forfeited their *own* Lives to *him*; after which he was to take the Blood of it, and *present* it before the Lord in the *Holy of Holies*, sprinkling it Seven Times with his Finger, *upon* and *before* the Mercy-Seat, by which Action he *interceded* with God to accept *that* Blood in *lieu* of the *forfeited* Lives of the People; and accordingly, the whole Performance is called *making an Atonement for the Children of Israel, for all their Sins once a Year*, Lev. xvi. 34. But for the *fuller* Explication of the *Priestly* Office, it is necessary we should briefly explain these Two essential *Acts* of it, *viz.* of *sacrificing* and *presenting* the *Sacrifice* to God by way of *Intercession* for the People.

As for the first of these, the Apostle tells us, that *every High-Priest is ordained to offer Gifts and Sacrifices*, Heb. viii. 3. And that he *is ordained for Men in Things pertaining unto God, that he may offer both Gifts and Sacrifices for Sin*, Heb. v. 1. It is true indeed to *sacrifice*, in a strict Sense, *i. e.* to *kill* the Sacrifice, seems not to have been so peculiar to the *Priestly* Office, as to *present* the

the Blood of the Sacrifice before the Lord by way of *Intercession*, the *latter* of which was so *appropriate* to the Priesthood, as that it was never allowed, upon any occasion whatsoever, for any but a *Priest* to perform it; but as for *killing* the Sacrifice, it seems that not only the *Priests*, but sometimes the *Levites*, *Vide* 2 *Chron.* xxx. 17. yea, and sometimes the People themselves were allowed to perform it, *Vide Lev.* iv. 24, 29, 33. tho it is probable, that the *Levites* were allowed it only in Cases of *Necessity* and the *People* only in *private* and *particular* Sacrifice; but in the *publick* and *general* Expiation, wherein Christ's dying for the Sins of the World, was more eminently *expressed* and *represented*; not only the *presenting* the Blood of the Sacrifice, but the *killing* it too, was peculiarly *appropriated* to the *Priesthood*. So that tho in *private* and *particular* Expiations, the People had a right to sacrifice, or *kill* the *Victim*, yet in all *publick* ones, such as our *Saviour*'s was, that Right was *incommunicably* inherent in the Priesthood. Now the killing of those Sacrifices which were designed for *Expiations* of Sin, was a *transferring* of Punishment from the *People* to the *Victim*: For, you must know, the *Jews* had Two sorts of Laws, *viz.* *Civil* and *Ritual*; their *Civil* Laws were enforced according to their *strictest* Sanction, with the *Penalty* of *Death*, which Penalty, in many Cases allowed by God, admitted of this mitigation, that the Life of a *Beast* should be accepted in exchange for the forfeited Life of the *Offender*. Their Ritual Laws were enforced with the Penalty of legal Uncleanness, and being *separated* upon that Account from the *Congregation* and *Publick Worship*; which Penalty also was thus far relaxed, that if they offered the Life of a *Beast* in Sacrifice, their Uncleanness should be thereby *purged*, and themselves restored to the Benefit of the publick Worship. In both which Cases, the Sacrifice was evidently *substituted* to suffer for the *Offender*; and in the first Case he was substituted to suffer that very Punishment, which the Offender had incurred. And therefore you find that the *greater* Crimes were no otherwise to be expiated, but by the Blood of the Offender *himself*, whereas for *lesser* ones the Blood of a *Beast* was accepted, which is a plain Argument, that that Punishment, which in *greater* Sins was *exacted* of the Criminal *himself*, was in the Case of *smaller* Sins *transferred* from the *Criminal* to the *Sacrifice*; and, that the Punishment of the *Beast* was *instead* of the Punishment of the *Man*. And this is most evident in the Case of the *Scape-Goat*, who, upon the High Priest's laying his Hands upon his Head, had the Sins of the People *transferred* on him, and was thereby so *polluted*, that he *defiled* the *Man*, that led him into the Wilderness; who was therefore obliged, before he returned to the Camp, to *lustrate* himself by *washing his Clothes, and bathing his Flesh in Water*, Lev. xvi. 26. And, so also those *expiatory* Sacrifices, whose *Blood* was carried into the *Holy Place*, and their *Bodies* burnt *without* the Camp, had the Sins of the People so *imputed* to them, and were so defiled by that Imputation, that they were ordered to be carried without the Camp *immediately*, lest they should defile the whole Congregation; and those who *carried* them out and *burnt* them, were so far *actually* defiled by them, that it was *unlawful* for them to return to the Camp, till they were legally *purified*; which is a plain Argument, that in these *Sacrificial Expiations* the *Sin* and *Guilt* of the *People* was still *transferred* upon the *Sacrifice*, and consequently, that the Death of these Sacrifices was instead of the Death of those Criminals; and accordingly, *Lev.* xvii, 11. we are told, that *it is the Blood, i. e.* of the Sacrifice, *that maketh an Atonement for the Soul.* And indeed this was the Sense which all Nations had of *Expiatory Sacrifices*, *viz.* that their *Death* was instead of the *Punishment*, due to the *Offenders* that offered them: For thus the *Jews*, by making *Expiation*, generally understand suffering *Punishment* for *another*, in order to *his* being *released* from suffering it *himself*: For thus where-ever it is said by them, *Ecce me in Expiationem*, the meaning is, *En me in ejus locum, ut portem iniquitates ejus, i. e.* I stand in such a one's place, that I may bear his Iniquities; and so, *Ecce me in expiationem R. Chijæ & filiorum ejus*, i. e. *castigationes quæ obveniunt*

mihi

mihi sint in expiationem R. Chijæ & filiorum ejus, Behold I am for an Expiation of *R. Chijah* and his Sons, *i. e.* Let the Afflictions that happen to me be for an Expiation of *R. Chijah* and his Sons. So when all the People were to say to the High Priest, *Simus nos expiatio tua,* the meaning was, *In nobis fiat expiatio tua, nosque subeamus tuo loco quicquid tibi evenire debet:* Let us be thy Expiation, that is, let thy Expiation be made upon us, and let us undergo in thy stead whatsoever evil thou hast deserved; of which see more, *Buxtorf. Lexic. Chald. p.* 1078. And accordingly in the Form of Prayer they used at the *killing* the *Sacrifice*, they plainly expressed the *Substitution* of it in the room of their *own* forfeited Lives; *Obsecro, Domine, peccavi, rebellis fui,* &c. O Lord, I obsecrate, I have sinned, I have been rebellious, I have acted perversly, I have done this and that evil, of which I now heartily repent; let this be my *Expiation*, and let those Evils which might justly fall upon *my* Head, fall upon the Head of my *Sacrifice*, *Outram de sacrif. p.* 273. And so also for the Gentiles, *Eusebius Demonst. l.* 1. tells us, that they looked upon their λύτρα or Expiations, as τὰ σφῶν ψυχῆς ἀντὶ ψυχῶν, ὥσπερ ψυχὴν ἀντὶ ψυχῆς, *i. e.* that their Lives were a Commutation for the Lives of those that offered them, as one should say a Life for a Life; and accordingly *Porphyry* tells us, that the first Original of the Sacrifice of *Animals* was, τίνας καιρὸυς ψυχὴν ἀντὶ ψυχῆς αἰτουμένους, *i. e.* Certain Occasions requiring that a Life should be offered for a Life, *Abstin. l.* 4. and hence they were wont to *curse* the *Sacrifice*, and solemnly to *imprecate* all those Evils on *it* which themselves had deserved, *vid. Herod. Euterp. & Serv. in Æneid.* 3. From all which it is abundantly evident, that this Priestly Act of *sacrificing* or *killing* the *expiatory* Sacrifice, was nothing else but a *translating* the *Punishment* that was due to the Offerer from his *Person* to his *Victim* or *Sacrifice*. But then,

Secondly, Besides this, another *Sacerdotal* Act was *presenting* the *Blood* of the *Sacrifice* to God by way of *Intercession* for the People: For when the *Sacrifice* was *slain*, the *Priest* was to take the *Blood* and *sprinkle* some of it round about the Altar of *Burnt Offerings*; and the rest of it, say the *Jews*, was *poured out* by the Priest on the South-side Floor of the Altar; where there were two Holes thro' which it ran into a Channel that conveyed it into the Valley of *Kidron*; but in the *Sin-Offerings* for the *High Priest* and the *Congregation*, he was to carry the Blood *within* the Sanctuary, and to *sprinkle* of it seven times before the Veil of the Sanctuary, and to put some of it upon the Horns of the Altar of *Incense*, after which the Remainder of the Blood was to be disposed of, as was said before, on the Altar of Burnt Offerings. And at the *great* Day of *Expiation*, the *High Priest* himself, having *slain* the *Sacrifice*, was to carry the *Blood* of it into the *Holy of Holies*, and there with his Finger to *sprinkle* the Blood of it seven times before the *Mercy-Seat*. Now this *sprinkling* of the *Blood* was nothing else but a solemn *presenting* of the *Life* of the *sacrificed* Animal to God, as an *Exchange* or *Price* of *Redemption* for the *forfeited* Life of the *Offender*: For, whatsoever was *offered* upon the *Altar* was always looked upon as *religiously* presented to God; so that by *sprinkling* the *Blood* on the Altar, which is the *Vehicle* of *Life*, and therefore is sometimes called the *Life*, *vid.* Gen. ix. 4. the *Life* was solemnly *tendered* and *presented* to God as to the *supreme Lord* of Life and Death; and the meaning of this *Tendry*, was to *move* God by way of *Intercession* to accept of *that* Life instead of the *Offender's*, which was *forfeited* into his Hands: For since, as a Learned Author of our own hath observed, all Divine Worship, whether *natural* or *instituted*, was either to *implore* or to *commemorate* God's *Grace* and *Favour*, this solemn *sprinkling* of the *Blood* in *expiatory* Sacrifices, must necessarily respect the *imploring* of God's Pardon of those Sins for which the *Expiation* was designed. So that in performing this *Rite*, the *Priest* was a silent *Intercessor* with God in the behalf of the People, and his action was a solemn *Deprecation*, of which this was the natural *language* and *meaning*; O Lord, I beseech thee, be merciful to these *guilty* Supplicants, in lieu of whose *Blood*, which I acknowledge is justly *for-*

 feited

feited to thee, I here present thee the *Life* of this *Sacrificed Animal*, whose *Blood* I am *sprinkling* on thy Altar; humbly imploring thee to accept it as a *ransom* for their Lives; and in *consideration* of it, to release them from that *mortal* Penalty in which they stand *bound* to thy *Justice*. Upon which *Intercession* of his, God's high Displeasure was *atoned*, and the *Priest* thereupon authorized to *bless the People*, *i. e.* to declare that God was *appeased* and *reconciled* to them.

And thus you see what the Office of Priesthood *is*, and in what *Acts* it *consists*: In sum therefore, it consists in *sacrificing* to God for the *Sins* of the People, and *interceding* with him, in the *virtue* of the Sacrifice, to be *propitious* and *merciful* to them.

I proceed now in the Second Place, to shew that *both* these Acts of the *Priestly* Office among the *Jews*, were *designed* and *intended* by God for *Types* and *Shadows* of the *Priesthood* of our *Saviour*. For as for the *first*, viz. *Sacrificing*, the Scripture plainly tells us, that it was instituted for a *Typical* Representation of the *Death* of our *Saviour*. For so the Author to the *Hebrews*, makes the *Sacrificed Body* of our *Saviour* to *answer* to, and *succeed* in the room of the whole Body of the *Jewish Sacrifices*, as the true *Antitype* of those *Types* and *Shadows*, Heb. x. 5, 6. &c. *Wherefore when he cometh into the World*, speaking of Christ, *he saith, Sacrifice and Offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me*, that is, a Body to be Sacrificed in the room of that former Sacrifice and Offering; *In burnt Offerings and Sacrifices thou hast had no Pleasure*; then said he, ver. 9. *Lo I come to do thy Will, O God*; that is, to die a Sacrifice for the Sins of the World; and thereby, saith he, *he taketh away the first*, that is, those Typical Sacrifices, *that he may establish the Second*, that is, that great Sacrifice of Christ's Body: For so it follows, verse 10. *By the which will we are sanctified, thro' the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all.* In which Words he plainly makes all the *Jewish* Sacrifices in general, to be *Types* and *Figures* of the *great Sacrifice* of our Saviour's *Death*. And indeed, as those Sacrifices were all of them to be *slain*, and to be all *sound* and *immaculate*; they were so far forth at least express *Types* of our Saviour, both as to his *Death*, and unspotted *Innocence* and *Purity*. But then, as for *those* Sacrifices whose Bodies were burnt *without* the Camp, *they* were more *peculiarly* Types, than any of the rest, of our *Saviour's Sacrifice*; because they had not only *all* those Things appertaining to them, by which the other Sacrifices represented it, but besides *that*, they were *Expiations* for *Sin*, as well as the *Sacrifice* of our *Saviour*; and by their being burnt *without* the *Camp*, did more eminently prefigure our Saviour's being crucified *without* the *City*. Hence the Apostle, *Heb.* xiii. 10, 11, 12. *We have an Altar whereof they have no right to eat which serve the Tabernacle; for the Bodies of those Beasts, whose Blood is brought into the Sanctuary by the High Priest for Sin, are burnt without the Camp*, lest they should *pollute* the Congregation; as being *defiled* and *cursed* upon the account of the Peoples *guilts* which were *transferred* upon them: *Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the People with his own Blood, suffered without the Gate*, that is, as an *Expiatory Sacrifice*, that took upon him the *guilts* of Mankind, and thereby became *polluted* and *accursed*. In which Words the *Death* of our *Saviour* is plainly represented, as the true *Antitype* of the *Expiatory* Sacrifices of the *Jews*; and accordingly, as all *Types* have much *less* in them, of that which they *prefigure*, than their *Antitypes*; so those *Expiatory* Sacrifices had *something* of *real* Expiation in them, tho much *less* than the *Sacrifice* of our *Saviour*. For so *Heb.* ix. 13, 14. *For if the Blood of Bulls and of Goats, and the Ashes of an Heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctify to the purifying of the Flesh*, (by which it is evident, that there was a *real* Expiation made by *those* Sacrifices, so far as concerned the *purifying Mens Flesh*, *i. e.* releasing them from *corporal* Punishments and *legal* Uncleannesses;) *How much more*, saith he, *shall the Blood of Christ, who, thro' the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your Consciences from dead Works?* Where the *same* Expiation in *kind*, that

that was made by those *Legal Sacrifices*, is expresly attributed, tho in a much higher *degree*, to the *Sacrifice* of our *Saviour*, which plainly argues the *former* to be a *Type* and *Shadow* of the *latter*.

And then, as for the *second* Act of the Jewish Priesthood, *viz.* his *presenting* the *Blood* of the *Sacrifice* to God by way of *Intercession* for the *People*, this was also instituted for a *Typical* Representation of our *Saviour*'s presenting the Blood of *his* Sacrificed Body to God by way of *Intercession* for *Mankind*. And hence his *Blood* is called *the Blood of sprinkling, which speaks better Things for us, than the Blood of Abel*, Heb. xii. 24. which is a plain allusion to the High Priest's *sprinkling* the *Blood* of the *Sacrifice* before the *Mercy-Seat*, on the *great* Day of Expiation; by which Action, as I shewed before, he *interceded* with God to be *propitious* to the People, in *consideration* of that *Blood* which he there *presented* in *their* behalf. And therefore as the *Holy of Holies* was a Type of *Heaven*, Heb. ix. 24. and the High Priest's entring *thereinto*, after he had *slain* the Sacrifice, a Type of our Saviour's entring into *Heaven* after the *Sacrifice* of himself, *Ibid.* ver. 7. 11, 12. so the High Priest's *sprinkling* the *Blood* before the *Mercy-Seat*, was also a Type of our Saviour's presenting his *Blood* to the Father in *Heaven*, and there pleading it in our behalf; and hence he is said to have *entred into the Holy Place*; that is, into Heaven, the Antitype of the Holy of Holies, *and to have obtained Eternal Redemption for us, neither by the Blood of Bulls and Goats*, as the Jewish High-Priest did, *but by his own Blood*, Heb. ix. 12. where the High Priest's entring into the Holy of Holies, *with the Blood of Bulls and Goats* is plainly opposed, as a Type to its Antitype, to Christ's entring into Heaven *with his own Blood*, and therefore the High Priest's interceding for the *People* in the *Holy of Holies*, in virtue of the Blood of *their* Sacrifices, must necessarily be Typical of Christ's interceding for *us* in *Heaven*, in the virtue of *his*. Thus, as God *cast* and *contrived* the *Rites* and *Ceremonies* of the Jewish *Law* in general, into a *Prefiguration*, or visible *Prophecy* of the Mysteries of the *Gospel*, that so by those *Emblematical* Predictions he might *intimate* before-hand those *glorious* Truths to *pious* and *inquisitive* Minds, which he intended afterwards more plainly to *reveal*, (*vid. Col.* ii. 17. and *Heb.* x. 1.) so particularly, in the Jewish *Priesthood*, he drew a rude *Draught* and *Representation* of the *future* Priesthood of our *Saviour*; that so by that *figurative* Sacrifice and Intercession he might visibly *foreshew* and *intimate* to the World the *Sacrifice* and *Intercession* of our *Saviour*. For thus it is evident from *Philo*, that the *Jews* understood their High Priest to be a Type of the Eternal Word or Messias; for thus in his Allegories he makes the Temple to be an Emblem of the World, Ἐν ᾧ καὶ Ἀρχιερεὺς ὁ πρωτόγονος αὐτοῦ θεῖος λόγος, in which God's first-born Divine Word is the High Priest; and in several other Parts of his Writings, he makes the High Priest's Crown and Vestments to be Types and Representations of the Dignity and Perfections of the Eternal Word; by which it is evident, that by their Typical High Priesthood, the *Jews* were in some measure instructed in the nature of the Priesthood of our Saviour.

Thirdly and Lastly, I shall now proceed to explain the *Priesthood* and *Priestly* Acts of our Saviour, *corresponding* to that *antient Priesthood* in which they were *prefigured*. In general therefore the Priesthood of our Saviour, corresponding to that antient Priesthood, consists in *offering up* himself a *Sacrifice* for our *Sins*, and in *presenting* that Sacrifice to God in *our* behalf, and thereby *interceding* with him to be *merciful* and *propitious* to us. So that the Priesthood of our Saviour consists in these *Two* Acts;

First, In *offering* up himself a *Sacrifice* for our *Sins*.

Secondly, In *presenting* that Sacrifice to God by way of *Intercession* for us; of each of which I shall discourse at large.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

Concerning the Sacrifice of our Saviour.

IN handling the first of these, *viz.* the Sacrifice of our Saviour, I shall endeavour, First, to shew that the *Death* of *Christ* had in it all the requisite Conditions of a most *real* and complete *Sacrifice* for *Sin.* Secondly, To make appear how *effectually* God's exacting *such* a Sacrifice, in order to his being reconciled to *Sinners*, conduces to their *Reformation.*

First, That the Death of Christ had in it all the requisite Conditions of a *real* and most *compleat Sacrifice* for *Sin.* Now to make both a *true* and *perfect expiatory* Sacrifice, there are Five Things indispensibly necessary.

First, That in being *Sacrificed* it should be *substituted* in the *room* of an *Offender* to be punished *for* him, in order to his being *released* from his own *personal* obligation to Punishment. For in all those *Legal* Expiations which *prefigured* this *great* Expiation of our *Saviour*, the *killing* of the *Sacrifice* was, as I shewed before, a *real* transferring and inflicting upon it the Punishment *due* to the *Offender* that offered it, in order to his being *excus'd* from suffering it in his own *Person.*

Secondly, Another necessary Condition of an Expiatory Sacrifice is, that it should be *pure*, *sound*, and *unblemished*; and indeed, this Condition is required in all kinds of Sacrifices, whether *Expiatory* or *Eucharistical*; that they should be *pure* or Legally *clean*, and that they should be *sound*, and without *blemish.* For so *Lev.* xxii. 20. *But whatsoever hath a blemish, that shall ye not offer*; *for it shall not be acceptable for you*; and ver. 21. *It shall be perfect*, i. e. sound and intire, *to be accepted*; *there shall be no blemish therein*: And then he goes on to Particulars, It shall not be *blind, or broken, or having a Wen, or Scurvy, or Scabbed*, verse 22. Now, tho the *legal* Uncleanness, and the *natural* Blemishes here forbidden in *Sacrifices*, had nothing of *Sin* or *Immorality* in them; yet the *prohibition* of these *natural* Blemishes in Sacrifices that were incapable of *moral* ones, denotes the necessity of a *moral* cleanness and unblemishedness in that *great Expiatory* Sacrifice for the Sins of the World, which they *typified* and *prefigured*; and hence Christ is called, *A Lamb without blemish and without spot*, 1 Pet. i. 19.

Thirdly, Another necessary Condition to a perfect Expiatory Sacrifice is, that it should be of such an intrinsick *worth* and *value*, as that its *Death* may be, in some measure, an *equivalent* Commutation for the *Punishment* which the *Offender* deserves. For the end of *punishing*, whether it be the *Offender* himself, or *another* in his stead, is to *secure* and *maintain* the *Authority* of the *Law*; in order *whereunto* it is highly requisite, that the *Punishment* should *ordinarily* be equivalent to the *demerit* of the *Crime*; otherwise it will not be a sufficient Motive to *warn* and *deter* Men from committing it. And herein consisted the *Imperfection* of the *antient* Expiatory Sacrifices, that what *they* suffered was much *short* of what the *Offenders*, they suffered for, deserved; for they only substitute the Life of a *Brute*, in the room of the Life of a *Man*, which is of far greater worth and value; and therefore by how much *less* valuable the Life of a *Beast* is than the Life of a *Man*, by so much *less* was the Punishment *transferred* upon the *Sacrifice* than the Guilt *contracted* by the *Offender.*

Fourthly, Another necessary Condition to the making of a true and perfect Sacrifice, was, that it should be *free* and *unforced* on the part of the *Offerer.* For since he had deserved the Punishment in his *own* Person, it was very fit, both that the *Sacrifice*, that was to undergo it *for* him, should be something that was his own, otherwise he could have no right to substitute it in his *own stead* or to *offer* its Life to God in *exchange* for his *own*; and that he should *freely* offer it to be *killed* in his stead, otherwise he had

not been *consenting* to the exchange, without which it must have been invalid, and consequently the Expiation *void*; and hence, *Lev.* i. 3. it is required that *he should offer it of his own voluntary Will at the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation before the Lord.*

Fifthly, It is also a necessary Condition to a true and perfect Sacrifice for Sin, that it should be *admitted* and *accepted* by God in the *room* and *stead* of the *Punishment* that is due to him from the Offender *himself.* For by *violating* his *Laws*, we give God a Right to *exact* the *Penalty* of them at our *own* Hands; so that if he pleases, he may refuse to admit of any *Substitute* to suffer *for* us; and if he will insist upon his Right to punish us in our *own* Persons, and refuse to admit of any *exchange*; what *another* suffers for us will signify nothing to our *discharge* or *acquittal*, because it is not our *own* suffering, who stand *personally* obliged to God to suffer the utmost Evil that our Sin deserves; and therefore to admit *another* to suffer for us, is an Act of pure *Grace* and *Favour* in him, which he may *grant* or *refuse* as he pleases. So that the *expiatory* Virtue of all Sacrifice lies in God's *admitting* and *accepting* it in exchange for that *personal* Punishment we owe him; and hence he is said to have *given them the Blood upon the Altar, to make an atonement for their Souls*, Lev. xvii. 11. that is, to have *admitted* and *accepted* that Blood which was offered on the Altar as an *Atonement* for their Lives, which were *forfeited* to him. And thus you see what are the *necessary* Conditions of a *real* and *perfect expiatory* Sacrifice; all which, as I shall now shew you, do fully *concentre* in the *Death* and *Sacrifice* of our *Saviour.* As,

I. In *dying* or being *sacrificed*, he was *substituted* in the *room* of sinful Men, to be *punished* for them in order to their being released from their *personal* obligation to Punishment. And hence, *Tit.* ii. 14. he is said to have *given himself for us that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works*; that is, he gave *his* Life in exchange for *ours*, and thereby became our ἀντίψυχος. For by what follows it is plain, that his giving himself *for* us here is to be understood by way of an *Expiation*; for it was, first, *to redeem us from all Iniquity*, which is the very Phrase by which the *virtue* and *efficacy* of *Propitiatory* Sacrifices is expressed; for so λυτρῶν, which signifies to *redeem*, in the *Greek*, is the same with כפר which signifies to *expiate* by *Sacrifice* in the *Hebrew*; and accordingly the *Greek* word λύτρον, which in the *Greek* signifies the Price of *Redemption*, is frequently used for the *Hebrew Copher*, which signifies a Price to *reconcile* or *propitiate*. So that Christ's giving himself for us, to *redeem* us from all Iniquity, must signify, according to the common acceptation of the Phrase, his laying down his Life *for us*, as the Price of our *propitiation* with *God.* For so among the *Jews* that common form of Speech, *Let me be your Redemption*, was as much as to say, Let *me* bear *your* Iniquities, and undergo the Punishment of them, that *you* may escape, *Buxtorf. Lexic. Chald.* 1078. Agreeably to which in *Heb.* ix. 15. Christ is said *to die for the Redemption of Transgressions*, that is, to *buy off* the *Punishment* of them with his own *Blood.* For so he is said to have given himself ἀντίλυτρον, *i. e.* a *Ransom* or *Price* of *Redemption for all*, 1 *Tim.* ii. 5, 6. and to have given his Life as a λύτρον or *Ransom for many*, Matth. xx. 28. But then, Secondly, his giving himself for us was to *purify us*, which also refers to the *Purifications* which were made by *Expiatory* Sacrifices. For so the word καθαρίζειν signifies to *cleanse* from *guilt* by *Sacrifice.* Thus *Lev.* xvi. 30. *On that Day shall the Priest make Atonement for ye to purify ye, that ye may be pure from all your Sins before the Lord*; and so the word is generally taken not only in the Writings of *Moses*, but also in all other Authors, by whom *Expiatory* Sacrifices are promiscuously called ἱλαστικὰ, ἁγνιστικὰ, and καθαρτικὰ, i. e. *atoning, sanctifying*, and *purifying.* Agreeably to which, *the Blood of Christ* is said *to purify us from all Sin, i. e.* from the *guilt* of all Sin, 1 *John* i. 7. For it was from *that* that the Blood of Sacrifices did *immediately* purify Men. And hence he is said to *have died for our Sins*, 1 Cor. xv. 3. to *have given himself for our Sins*, Gal. i. 4. and to *have*

once suffered for our Sins, the just for the unjust, 1 Pet. iii. 8. and his *Blood* is said to *be shed for many for the remission of Sins,* Matth. xxvi. 28. and to be *a Propitiation for our Sins,* 1 John iv. 10. by which Expressions it is evident, that our Sins were the *cause*, and the expiation of them the *end* of Christ's Suffering; and it is upon this account, that he is said to *bear our Sins in his own Body on the Tree,* 1 Pet. ii. 24. that is, to undergo the Punishment of them in those exquisite Torments he endured upon the Cross, and to *be made Sin for us,* 2 Cor. v. 21. even as the *Expiatory* Sacrifices were made *Sin,* i. e. *Piacula*, that underwent the *Punishment* of Sin for the *Offenders* that offered them, *Lev.* iv. 3, 29. and also to *be made a curse for us,* Gal. iii. 13. that is, by having the *guilts* of our Sins transferred on *him*, even as the Sacrifices were *cursed*, as was shewed before, by the very *translation* of the guilts of the People upon *them*; and accordingly, as by *this* Translation, *those* Sacrifices were render'd *cursed* and *unclean*; and, as *such*, were to be burnt *without* the Camp; so our Saviour, upon the same account, *suffered without the Gate*, Heb. xiii. 11, 12. And, to name no more, in *Isaiah* liii. we are told, *That he should bear our Griefs, and carry our Sorrows, and be wounded for our Transgressions, and bruised for our Iniquities; that the Chastisements of our Peace were upon him, and that by his Stripes we should be healed; that the Lord hath laid upon him the Iniquities of us all, and that for our Transgressions he was stricken, that his Soul was made an Offering for Sin; that he should bear our Iniquities, and be numbred with the Transgressors, and bear the Sins of many, and make intercession for the Transgressors*; all which Expressions do as plainly denote *him* to be *substituted* to be punished for *us*, in order to our *release*, as it is *possible* for Words to do; and, unless we will admit *that* to be the sense of Scripture, which the words of it *do* as plainly import, as they *could* have done if it *had* been its sense, it will be impossible to determine it to any sense whatsoever; because Men may *prevaricate* upon the *plainest* words, and with quirks of *Wit and Criticism* pervert them to a contrary meaning. And I dare undertake, by the *same* Arts that our Adversaries use to avoid the force of these Testimonies, to *elude* the *plainest* Words that the Wit of Man can invent to express *this* Proposition, that *Christ's Death was a Punishment for our Sins*; which to any reasonable Man is a sufficient Answer to all the *Socinian* Cavils. And indeed the whole *current* of Scripture runs so *clear* against them, that they do as good as acknowledge, that according to the most *common* and *natural* acceptation of its words, it fairly implies the Doctrine we contend for, *viz.* that the Death of Christ was a real Punishment for the Sins of the World. But their main Plea is, that it is *unjust*, in the nature of the thing, to punish *one* Man for the Sins of *another*, and therefore we ought rather to impose *any* Sense on the Words of Scripture, how *foreign* soever, than attribute to God so great a piece of *Injustice*, as the punishing his *own Son* for the *Sins* of the *World*. But as for the *Justice* of this Procedure, I shall endeavour by and by to *clear* and *vindicate* it.

II. He died in *pure* and *spotless* Innocence; and this was highly necessary to his being an *expiatory* Sacrifice for the Sins of *others*. For had he been a *Sinner*, he had deserved to die upon his own account, and the *utmost* Effect of his Death could have been only the *Expiation* of his *own* Sin, by which his *Life* must have been forfeited to the Divine Justice; and it is impossible that he, who hath forfeited his own Life, should by his Death redeem the forfeited Lives of *others*. And accordingly, *Heb.* vii. 26, 27. we are told, that *such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from Sinners, and made higher than the Heavens, who needed not daily, as those High Priests, to offer up Sacrifice first for his own Sins*, &c. because the Sacrifice which he offered was his *own Life*; so that, had he been obliged to offer that *for his own Sins*, it could have made no Expiation for *ours*; the bare Payment of a Man's *own* debt being no satisfaction for *other* Mens. And therefore, herein the Apostle places the *virtue* and *efficacy* of Christ's Blood, by which it was rendred sufficiently *precious* to be a Ransom for the Sins of the World,

World, that it was *of a Lamb without Spot or Blemish*, *i. e.* the Blood of a most *holy* and *innocent* Person, who never deserved the least Evil on his *own* Account, and therefore was truly *precious*, and fit to be a Ransom for the Sins of *others*, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. And accordingly he is said to *be made sin for us*, *i. e.* to be devoted as a Sacrifice for *our* Sins, *who knew no Sin*, 2 Cor. v. 21. where you see the great *Emphasis* of his Sacrifice is laid upon his *Innocence*, as that which was necessary to qualify him to be a Sacrifice for *others*. So that by that *spotless* Obedience of Christ's Life, thro' the whole Course of which *he did no sin, neither was there any guile found in his Mouth*, he *consecrated* himself an *acceptable* Sacrifice to God for the Sins of the World.

III. His Death was of sufficient *intrinsick Worth* and *Value* to be an *equivalent Commutation* for the Punishment that was due to the *whole* World of Sinners: For the reason why God would not pardon Sinners *without* some *Commutation* for the Punishment that was due from them to his Justice, was, that he might *preserve* and *maintain* the Authority of his *Laws* and *Government*: For had he exacted the Punishment from the *Sinners* themselves, he must have *destroyed* the whole Race of Mankind; and had he *pardoned* them, on the other hand, without any Punishment at all, he must have exposed his *Authority* to the *Contempt* and *Outrage* of every *bold* and *insolent* Offender; and therefore to avoid these *dangerous* Extremities of *Severity* and *Impunity*, his infinite Wisdom found out this Expedient, to admit of some *Exchange* for our *Persons* and *Punishment*, that so some *other* Thing or Person being *substituted* in *our* stead, to suffer and be punished *for* us, neither *we* might be *destroyed*, nor our *Sins* be *unpunished*. This therefore being the *Reason* of God's *admitting* of *Sacrifice*, it was highly requisite that the *Punishment* of the *Sacrifice* should bear some *Proportion* to the *Guilt* of the *Offenders*; otherwise it will not *answer* God's *Reason* of *admitting* it: For since the Reason of his admitting it, was the *Security* of his *Authority*, the *less* he had admitted, the *less* he must have secured his Authority by it: For to have exacted a *small* Punishment for a *great* Demerit, would have been, within a *few* degrees, as destructive to his Authority, as to have exacted *none* at all; to punish but *little* for *great* Crimes, is within *one* Remove as mischievous to Government as *total* Impunity; and therefore to support his own Authority over us, it was highly requisite that he should exact not only a *Punishment* for our Sin, but also a Punishment *proportionable* to the *Guilt* and *Demerit* of it: For there is no doubt, but the *nearer* the Punishment is to the Demerit of the Sin, the *greater* Security it must give to his Authority. And upon *this* Account the Sacrifices of the *Jews* were infinitely *short* of making a *full* Expiation for their Sins; because, being but *brute Animals*, their *Death* was no way a *proportionable* Punishment to the *great* Demerit of the Sins of the People: For what proportion could there be between the *momentary* Sufferings of a *Beast*, and those *eternal* Sufferings which the Sins of a *Man* do deserve? The Death of a *Beast* is a Punishment very short of the Death of a *Man*, but *infinitely* short of that *eternal* Death to which the Man's *Guilts* do *oblige* him: and accordingly the Expiations, which were made for *Men* by the Death of those *Beasts*, were very short and imperfect: For so the Apostle tells us, that they only *sanctified to the purifying of the Flesh*, Heb. ix. 13. that is, to the *acquitting* them from their *Corporal* Penalties and *Legal* Uncleannesses; but could not at all *make them perfect, as pertaining to their Consciences*, *i. e.* could not *expiate* the *Guilt* of any *wilful* Sin, by which their *Consciences* were laid *waste* and *wounded*, ver. 9. And accordingly, the *Heathen* seem to be aware how *short* the Death of *Beasts* was of the Punishment which was due for the Sins of *Men*: For tho' in ordinary Cases *they* sacrificed *Beasts*, as well as the *Jews*, yet in *great* Extremities, when they conceived their Gods to be *highly* displeased with them, even the most *civilized* of them sacrificed *Men*; which shews, that they thought the *Death* of *Beasts* to be an *insufficient* Expiation for the *Sins* of *Men*. And indeed it cannot be denied, but that the Sacrifice of a *Man*, as *such*, is much more *pro-*

portionable to the Punishment which the Sins of Men deserve, than the Sacrifice of a *Beast*; because a Man is a much *nobler* Creature, as being far advanced *above* a Beast by the Prerogative of his *Reason*; and consequently *his* Death, considered as a *Man*, must be a much more *valuable* Exchange for the Punishment that is due to those he dies for. But *herein* the Heathen were miserably mistaken; that they did not consider that the *Men* whom *they* sacrificed were *Sinners* as well as themselves, and that it is a much greater *Flaw* in an *Expiatory* Sacrifice to be a *Sinner* than to be a *Brute*: For whereas the *latter* only renders it less *effectual* and *valuable*; the *former*, as was shewn before, renders it utterly *void* and *insignificant*; and therefore, tho the Death of a *Man*, considered as such, is of much more *value* than the Death of a *Beast*, yet to expiate for the Sins of Men, there is more internal *Virtue* and *Efficacy* in the Death of an *innocent* Beast, than of a *sinful* Man; because the *latter* can expiate only for his *own* Sin, whereas the *former* can have no Sin but that of *others* to expiate. Since therefore Men were all *spotted* and *blemished* with Sin, there was no Life so fit for them to *offer* to God, in *Commutation* for their *forfeited* Lives, as that of *innocent Brutes*; so that the *best* Commutation they could make was infinitely *short* of their Demerit. And, suppose that the *Men* which the Heathen offered, had been all *pure* and *innocent*, yet their *Lives* would have been only an *equivalent* Commutation for the *forfeited* Lives of an *equal* Number of Sinners; unless therefore *one* half of Mankind had been *innocent*, and they had been sacrificed for the *other* half that was guilty, it had not been an *equal* Commutation so much as for the *temporal* Punishment, which was due to God from the *Guilty*; but then for their *eternal* Punishment, a *Hecatomb* of *Angels* had been *short* and *insufficient*: For what *Proportion* is there between a *temporary* Death and an *eternal* Misery? Since therefore, in great Compassion to us, God hath thought meet to accept of a *Sacrifice* in lieu of that *Punishment* which was due to him from *Mankind*; and since to *secure* his own *Authority*, it was highly requisite, that what this Sacrifice suffered for us, should be in some measure *equivalent* to what we had *deserved*, and since we had deserved to suffer *for ever*, it necessarily follows that this Sacrifice must be something *infinitely* more *precious* and *valuable* than the Blood of *Bulls* and *Goats*, yea, than the Lives of *Men* or *Angels*; and what can that be but the *Blood* of the *Eternal Son of God*, the infinite *Dignity* of whose *Person* rendred his *Sufferings* for us *equivalent* to the infinite *Demerit* of our *Sins*: For it was the Dignity of his Person that gave the *Value* to his Sufferings, and *enhanced* his *temporary Death* to a full Equivalence to those *endless Miseries* which we had deserved: For if the Life of a King be (as *David*'s People told him) *worth ten thousand Lives*, of what an *infinite* Value must the Life of *the Lord of Glory* and of the *Prince of Life* be, who being the *Son of God*, of the same *Nature* and *Essence* with his *eternal Father*, must from *thence* necessarily *derive* upon his Sacrifice an *Immensity* of *Worth* and *Efficacy*. And hence we are said to be *purchased* with the *Blood of God*, Acts xx. 28. and to have the *Life of God laid down* for us, *John* iii. 16. and to be *redeemed* not *with corruptible Things, as Silver and Gold, but with the precious Blood of Christ*, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. and accordingly the Author to the *Hebrews* makes the *Virtue* and *Efficacy* of Christ's Blood to consist in the *Worth* and *Value* of it; *For if the Blood of Bulls and Goats*, &c. *sanctified to the purifying of the Flesh*; *how much more shall the Blood of Christ, who thro' the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your Consciences from dead Works to serve the living God?* Heb. ix. 13, 14. By all which it is evident, that it was the infinite *Dignity* of Christ's *Person*, which derived that infinite *Merit* on his *Sacrifice*, whereby it became an *equivalent* to the infinite *Demerit* of our *Sins*. Nay, of *such* an infinite Value and Worth was his Sacrifice, that it not only *countervailed* for the Punishment due for our Sin, but did abundantly *preponderate* it; upon which Account God engaged himself, not only to *remit* that Punishment, in consideration of it, but also to bestow his *Spirit* and *Eternal Life* on us, *both* which, as hath been

shewn

ſhewn before, are as well the *Purchaſe* of Chriſt's *Blood*, as the Remiſſion of our Sins: For God might have *remitted* our *Puniſhment* without *ſuper-adding* the Gift of his *Spirit* and *Eternal Life* to it; and therefore, ſince in conſideration of Chriſt's Blood, he hath ſuper-added *theſe* Gifts to the Remiſſion of our Puniſhment, it is evident that his Blood was *equivalent* to *both*, *i. e.* that it was not only a *valuable* Conſideration for the *Pardon* of our *Sins*, but alſo for the *Aſſiſtance* of his *Spirit* and our *eternal Happineſs*.

IV. His Death was on *his* Part *voluntary* and *unforced*: For ſince, as a Sacrifice, he was to be *innocent*, and yet to undergo the *Puniſhment* of our Sin, he could not *be* the *one* and *do* the other, without his own free *Conſent* and *Approbation*: For no *innocent* Perſon can be juſtly made obnoxious to *Puniſhment*, but by his own *Act* and *Choice*; becauſe *Puniſhment* bears a neceſſary reſpect to *Sin*, and the Deſert of *ſuffering* evil, doth originally ſpring out of *doing* evil. So that an *innocent* Perſon, conſidered as *ſuch*, cannot *deſerve* to be puniſh'd, nor conſequently be juſtly *obliged* thereunto; but yet, notwithſtanding his *Innocency*, he may by his own *Will* and *Conſent*, oblige *himſelf* to undergo a Puniſhment, which otherwiſe he did not *deſerve*; and when he hath ſo obliged himſelf, the Puniſhment may be *juſtly* exacted of him: For tho he hath no Sin of his *own* to be puniſhed for, yet he may by his own Act *oblige* himſelf to undergo the Puniſhment of *another* Man's. And therefore, tho *merely* as an *innocent* Perſon, he cannot *deſerve* to be puniſhed, either upon his *own* Account, or any *other* Man's, becauſe having no Sin of his *own*, he cannot be guilty of *another* Man's; yet ſo far as he hath the *free* Diſpoſal of *himſelf*, he may *ſubſtitute* himſelf in the *room* of one that is *guilty*, and thereby render himſelf *obnoxious* to *his* Puniſhment. As for Inſtance, Suppoſe that by ſome *criminal* Action of his own, a Man hath forfeited his *Liberty* or *Life* to the Law, it is certain that no *innocent* Man, as *ſuch*, can be thereupon *obliged* to ſuffer *Death* or *Impriſonment*; but ſuppoſe that this innocent Man, having the free *Diſpoſal* of himſelf, ſhall *voluntarily* offer his own *Life* or *Liberty* to the Magiſtrate in *exchange* for the forfeited Life or Liberty of the Criminal, and the Magiſtrate ſhall think meet to *accept* it, in this Caſe he is *juſtly* liable, notwithſtanding his *Innocence*, to undergo the Puniſhment that was due to the Offender: For if *he* may juſtly *offer* this Exchange, as there is no doubt but he may, ſuppoſing that he hath the *free Diſpoſal* of himſelf, to be ſure the *Magiſtrate* may juſtly *accept* of it; becauſe the Life of the *Offender* is as much in *his* Diſpoſal, as the Life that is *offered* him in *exchange* for it, is in the Diſpoſal of the *Offerer*: So that *he* hath as much Right to give the *Offerer* the Offender's Life for *his*, as the Offerer hath to give his *own Life* for the *Offenders*; and when *both* Parties have a Right to the Goods which they *exchange* with *each other*, and the Goods which they *receive*, are, on both ſides, *equivalent* to the Goods which they *give*, it is impoſſible the Exchange ſhould be *injurious* to *either*: the *Magiſtrate* cannot be injured, becauſe for the Life of the *Offender* which he *gives*, he *receives* the Life of the *Offerer*, which is *equivalent*: the *Offerer* cannot be injured, becauſe for his *own* Life which he *gives*, he *receives* the Life of the *Offender*, which is *dearer* to him; and *neither* Party being *injured*, the Exchange muſt be *juſt* and *equal* on both ſides. Now that Chriſt had the *free* Diſpoſal of his *own* Life, he himſelf tells us, *John* x. 18. *No Man taketh my Life from me, but I lay it down of myſelf; I have Power to lay it down, and I have Power to take it up again; this Commandment have I received of my Father.* And that the Lives of our Souls were in *God*'s free Diſpoſal, as being juſtly *forfeited* to him by our *Sins*, the Scripture aſſures us, when it tells, that *all have ſinned*, and that *the Wages of Sin is Death*. Chriſt's Life therefore being in his *own* free Diſpoſal, he had an undoubted Right to exchange it with God for the Lives of our Souls; and the Lives of our Souls being in *God*'s free Diſpoſal, he had as undoubted a Right to exchange them with Chriſt's for his Life, upon the free *Tendry* which he made of it. And in this Exchange *neither* Party could be *injured*, becauſe they both received an *equiva-*

lent for what they gave; *Christ* gave his own Life to God, for which God gave him the Lives of our Souls in exchange, which were far *dearer* to him; *God* gave the Lives of our Souls to Christ, for which Christ gave him his own most precious Life in exchange; which, considering the infinite *Dignity* of his *Person*, was at the least *tant-amount*. It is true indeed, *both* Parties having a *Right* to the free Disposal of the Goods which they exchange with each other, to render the Exchange *just* and *valid*, it was necessary that *both* should be freely *consenting* to it: Now that *God* was freely consenting, I shall shew by and by; and that *Christ* was so too, the Scripture expresly testifies; for so we are told, that *he gave himself for our Sins*, Gal. i. 4. and that *he gave his Life a Ransom for many*, and *gave his Flesh for the Life of the World*, Mat. xxi. 28. and, in a word, that, *he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity*, Tit. ii. 14. and that *he laid down his Life for us*, 1 John iii. 16. all which plainly imply, that by his own *voluntary Consent*, he substituted himself to suffer in *our* stead, that *we* might escape; and freely exchanged his *own* Life with God for the Lives of *our* Souls, which were *forfeited* to him. And if, *notwithstanding* his *Innocence*, it were *just* in God to expose him, *without* any respect to *our* Sins, to all those bitter Sufferings he endured, (and that it *was* so, the *Socinians* themselves must *acknowledge*, or charge God with *Injustice*) how much *more* was it just, when of his own *accord* he *substituted* himself to bear *our* Punishment for us, and freely *exchang'd* his *Life* for our *Salvation*?

V. And Lastly, His Death was *admitted* and *accepted* by God in lieu of the Punishment which was due to him from Mankind; and it is *this* that *compleats* it an *Expiatory* Sacrifice, and *without* this, it had been altogether *insignificant* to the Expiation of Sin, notwithstanding all the above-named Qualifications: For it is the *personal* Punishment of the *Offender*, which *Sin* gives God a *Right* to, and which the *Obligation* of his *violated* Law *exacts*: Since therefore *all* Mankind had *sinned*, they *all* stood *bound* to God to *suffer* the desert of their Sin in their *own* Persons, and therefore the suffering of *another* in our *stead*, can signify nothing towards the releasing us from this *Obligation*, unless God, in pure *Grace* and *Favour* to us, shall please to *admit* and *accept* it; because *anothers* suffering is not *ours*, and it is *ours* that God hath a *Right* to. Indeed the *Punishment* of the guilty Person *himself*, supposing it to be *equal* to his *fault*, doth, without any interposal of *Grace*, extinguish the *guilt* of it, and by its *own* force and virtue *dissolve* his Obligation to Punishment; because when a Man hath suffered as *much* as he *deserves*, he hath suffered as much as the Law can *oblige* him to, and so consequently cannot be obliged to suffer any *more*; but should *another* suffer for me even as much as I deserved to suffer *myself*, it will be altogether *insignificant* to the expiation of my guilt, unless God in mere *Grace* will *accept* it for *my* suffering; because it is not *another's* suffering but my *own* that the Obligation of his Law *demands* and *exacts* of me; and altho the *other's* suffering for me may as *effectually* secure the *Honour* and *Authority* of God's Law, as if I had suffered what I deserved in my *own* Person, yet it is evident that in *admitting* the others suffering *instead* of mine, God *remits* and *relaxes* the Obligation of his Law, which requires that I should suffer in my own Person. And therefore, notwithstanding that Christ hath *suffered* for us, and God hath *admitted* his suffering for ours, yet this being out of mere *grace* and *favour* to us, he is still truly said to pardon and *forgive us for Christ's sake*, Eph. iv. 32. because for the sake of *Christ's* suffering he graciously remits to *us* the Obligation of his Law, which requires the Punishment of our Sin at our *own* Hands; and since his remitting to us the Obligation of his Law for the sake of Christ's suffering was pure *grace* and *favour*, he was not at all obliged to remit it *unconditionally*; but being absolute Master of his own Graces and Favours, he might remit it upon what *Terms* and *Conditions* he pleased. So that, tho if we had suffered in our *own* Persons, the *utmost* of what our Sin doth *deserve*, he had been

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obliged in *Justice* to discharge us *without* any farther *condition*; yet since out of his own *free grace* he hath admitted *another* to suffer for us, he may admit it with what *Limitations* he pleases; and if he shall think meet (as he *hath* done) to limit it to our *Repentance* and *Amendment*, all that Christ hath suffered for us will be *insignificant* to our discharge from our Obligation to Punishment, unless we *repent* and *amend*. So that the Death of *Christ*, you see, doth not expiate Mens Sins, as their *personal* Punishments do, by their *own* natural Virtue, but by Virtue of God's *accepting* it upon his own *Terms* and *Conditions:* And without God's *accepting* it, it would not have been at all an Expiation for the *Sins of the World*, and without the *Conditions* upon *which* he accepteth it, *viz.* our *Repentance* and *Amendment*, it will not be at all an Expiation for *ours*. Now God hath solemnly declared his *Acceptance* of *Christ's* Death as an *Expiation* for our Sins; for it was God that *laid upon him the Iniquities of us all*, Isa. liii. 6. that *gave his only begotten Son*, John iii. 16. and *sent him to be a Propitiation for us*, 1 John iv. 10. which plainly imply his free acceptance of him; and therefore Christ is said to have *given himself for us an Offering and a Sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour*, Eph. v. 2. *i. e.* for an Expiation that was highly *grateful* and *acceptable* to him. So that *now* the Expiation of our Sins by the blood of Christ wholly depends on *our* performing the *Condition* on which God hath accepted it; and since it is upon Condition, that we *repent* and *amend*, that God hath accepted the Blood of Christ in Exchange for the eternal Punishment we owe him, unless we perform *this* Condition, the Blood of Christ will not at all *avail* us, but we shall still remain as much *obliged* to undergo that Punishment, as if he had *never* died for us *at all*. God's *acceptance*, indeed, hath made the Death of Christ *available* for us under those *Conditions* and *Limitations* upon *which* he accepted it; but if when he hath accepted it *conditionally*, we expect that it should avail us *absolutely* and *unconditionally*, we miserably *deceive* and *abuse* our own Souls. Thus far therefore God's *acceptance* of Christ's Death, *instead* of the Punishment we have deserved, hath rendred it an effectual *expiation* and *ransom* for Sinners, that if they *repent* and *amend*, they shall be *released* and *acquitted* from the Obligation they lie under to suffer eternal *Punishment* in their *own* Persons, and *entitled* to everlasting *Life* and *Happiness*. And thus the Death of Christ, you see, had in it all the necessary Qualifications of a *real* and *compleat* propitiatory Sacrifice. I proceed therefore in the Second Place, to shew what a *wise* and *effectual* Method this of God's admitting Christ's Sacrifice for Sinners is to *reduce* and *reform* Mankind, which will evidently appear by considering these Five Things:

First, That the Sacrifice of Christ's Death was a most *sensible* and *affecting* acknowledgment of the infinite *guilt* and *demerit* of our Sin. For thus under the Law, the offering of *Propitiatory* Sacrifices implied a most *solemn* and *sensible* Confession of the *guilt* of the *Offerer*. For his laying his *Hand* upon the *Head* of his Sacrifice, was a *Symbolical* Action, by which he solemnly *acknowledged* to God that he had justly *deserved* to suffer that Death *himself* which his *Sacrifice* was suffering for him; and accordingly the *Jews* have this Maxim, *Ubi non est peccatorum confessio, ibi non est impositio manuum, quia manuum impositio ad confessionem pertinet*; where there is no Confession of Sins there is no imposition of Hands, because the imposition of Hands appertains to Confession. For so *Lev.* v. 5. they are particularly directed to *confess* their Sins upon their *bringing their Trespass-Offering before the Lord*; and, as hath been shewn before, they had a set *Form* of *Confession* in all their *expiatory* Sacrifices; and particularly in that *solemn* Propitiation, *viz.* the dismission of the *Scape-Goat*, the High Priest is directed to lay both his Hands upon the Goat's Head, and *to confess over him all the Iniquities of the Children of* Israel, Lev. xvi. 21. So that as *Confession* is a kind of *audible* Sacrifice, so *Sacrifice* was a kind of *visible* Confession; and the demerit of their Sin being thus represented to their *Eyes* by the Death of their Sacrifice, was far more apt to *move* and *affect* them

them with *horror* and *detestation* of it, than any *audible* Confession, how *severe* or *pungent* soever. And accordingly our Saviour in *offering* up himself as an expiation for our Sin, did, as it were, lay his hand upon his *own* head, and, as *our* Representative, solemnly *acknowledge* to God, that *we* had justly *deserved* to suffer for our Sin a Punishment *equivalent* to that which *he* was undergoing for us. And what a *dreadful* one must that be which is *equivalent* to the *Death* of the *Son of God*? What less Punishment than our *everlasting* Misery can *countervail* the *temporary* Death of him who was so *eminent* and *innocent*, who was *God-man* united in *one* Person, and the *Lamb of God* without *spot* or *blemish*? If the *Jews* by sacrificing a *Beast* did make such a *moving* acknowledgment, that they *themselves* deserved to die, how much more did Christ by sacrificing *himself* for us, acknowledge in our stead that we deserved to die *eternally*? So that whatsoever *virtue* there is in the most *bitter* and *pathetick* Confession to create in Mens Minds a *horror* and *detestation* of their Sins, all *that* and much *more* there is in the Sacrifice of our Saviour, whose Blood cried *louder* against our Sins, and made a far more *Tragical* Confession of their demerit than it is possible for the most *sorrowful* Penitent to do with all the *Eloquence* of his *grief* and bitter *strains* of *self-abhorrence*. And hence our Saviour is said to have *condemned Sin in the Flesh*, Rom. viii. 3. *i. e.* to have solemnly *acknowledged* by his *dying* for it, what a *dreadful* Punishment it *deserves*.

Secondly, It is to be considered also, that the Sacrifice of Christ's Death was a most *ample* declaration of God's *Severity* against our *Sins*. All *wise* Governours ought so to exercise their *Mercy*, as that it may not be *prejudicial* to their *Authority*, by giving Offenders *encouragement* to *kick* against it; but whilst their Mercy is *easy*, and apt to be moved by *slight* Reasons and Motives, it will infallibly *expose* their *Authority*, and render it *cheap* and *vile* in the Eyes of *bold* and *insolent* Offenders: The *Reasons* therefore which move a Prince to pardon *Criminals* ought to be such, if possible, as give all manner of *discouragement* to them from *presuming* upon *impunity* for the *future*. God therefore being *inclined* by the infinite *benignity* of his Nature, to shew *Mercy* to Sinners, was obliged in *Wisdom* to shew it in *such* a way, and upon *such* Reasons, as might sufficiently *discourage* them from *presuming* upon his *Mercy*, to the *prejudice* of his *Authority*; and there is no Reason could be so sufficient to this end, as a *valuable* Sacrifice to suffer in our *stead*, and *bear* the *Punishment* of our Sin; which Reason carries with it such an *awful* Severity, as must needs *dishearten* any *considering* Sinner, from presuming upon impunity if he *go on* in his Sin. For, next to exacting the Punishment of the Offender *himself*, the most *dreadful* Severity he could have expressed was, not to remit it upon any Consideration but *this*, that some *other* should undergo it in his *stead*; and by how much *greater* and more *valuable* the Person is, who undergoes it for us, so much *greater* and more *formidable* God's Severity appears in remitting it to us. Since therefore, in consideration of our Pardon, God would admit no *meaner* Sacrifice than the precious *Blood* of his own *Eternal Son*, he hath hereby expressed the *utmost* indignation against our Sin, that he could possibly do, unless he had absolutely resolved *never* to pardon it at all. So that *now* we have all the *reason* that Heaven or Earth can afford us, to *tremble* at his *Severity*, even while we are within the *Arms* of his *Mercy*. For what Man in his Wits would take *encouragement* to *sin on* from a *Mercy* that cost the *Blood* of the *Son of God*? He that can presume upon *such* a reason of Mercy, hath *Courage* enough to *outface* the Flames of *Hell*, and if Hell itself had stood *open* before us, and we had *seen* the damn'd Ghosts weltering in the Flames of it, it would not have given us such a *loud* and *horrible* warning of God's *Severity* against our Sin as this *tremendous* Sacrifice of the Son of God doth. If then a *Mercy* that is so *secured* from being made an *encouragement* to Sin, by the *terrible* reason and consideration upon which it is *founded*, cannot *deter* us from *sinning on*, there is no *wise* Mercy that we are capable of,

of, and consequently no Mercy that the great God can indulge with *safety* to his *Authority*. For what *Mercy* can be *safe* from our *abuse* and *presumption*, if *this* be not, that is thus *guarded* with *thunder*, and *attended* with the *utmost* severity that Mercy could possibly admit of? Wherefore if after I have seen my Saviour in his Agony *deprecating* with *fruitless* cries that *fearful* Cup which I deserved; if after I have beheld him *hanging* on the *Cross*, covered with *Wounds* and *Blood*, and in the bitter Agony of his Soul heard him crying out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* And, in a word, if after I have seen that God, to whom he was infinitely *dear* and *precious*, turn a *deaf* ear to his *mournful* Cries, and utterly *refuse* to *abate* him so much as one *degree* or *circumstance* of a most *shameful* and *tormenting* Death, in consideration of *my* Pardon; if, I say, after such a *horrible* Spectacle, I have *heart* enough to *sin on*, I am a *couragious* Sinner *indeed*, or rather a *desperate* one, not to be *affected* or *restrained* by all the *Terrors* of *Hell*.

Thirdly, This Sacrifice of Christ is also to be considered, as a most *obliging* Expression of the *Love* of *God* and our *Saviour* to us. For, if God had so pleased, he might have exacted our Punishment at our *own* Hands, and made us smart *for ever* in our *own* Persons; and this notwithstanding we had heartily *repented*. For tho to *repent* is the *best* thing a Sinner *can* do, yet it doth not alter the *nature* of the *Sin* he repenteth of, so as to render it *less* evil or *less* deserving of Punishment; nor indeed is Repentance a *sufficient* reason to move the *all-wise* Governor of the World to grant a publick Act of *Pardon* and *Indulgence* to Sinners; it being inconsistent with the safety of any Government, *Divine* or *Humane*, so far to *encourage* Offenders, as to *indemnify* them by a publick *Declaration*, meerly upon *condition* of their Future *Repentance* and *Amendment*. For all Men are naturally apt to presume that God will be *better* to them than his *word*, and therefore had he declared that he would pardon them upon their *Repentance* without any *other* reason, *this* would have encouraged them to hope that he might pardon them, tho they repented not *at all*, or at least tho they repented but by *halves*. Wherefore since our *Repentance* is not a *sufficient* reason to oblige God to grant a Publick *Pardon* to Sinners, and since this was the *best* reason we could offer in our own behalf to move him thereunto, it hence necessarily follows, that he might have *justly* exacted the Punishment of our Sin of *us*, and made us smart for it *for ever*, notwithstanding the *best* reason we could have offered him to the *contrary*. But such was his *goodness* towards us, as to admit *another* to suffer in *our* stead, that so neither *we* might be *ruined* nor our *Sins* be *unpunished*. And then that the Punishment of our Sin might be a *sufficient* reparation to his *injured* Authority, he *admitted* his *own Son* upon his *voluntary* offering himself to undergo it for us, who by the *dignity* and *innocence* of his *Person*, rendred that *temporary* Death he underwent for us *equivalent* to that *eternal* Death which we had deserved. Now what a *Prodigy* of *love* was this, that the God of Heaven, whom we had so infinitely *offended*, should part with his *own Son*, for us, and freely consent that *he* should undergo *our* Punishment! Which while I seriously consider, it *puzzles* my *conceit*, and *out-reaches* my *wonder*: so that tho I have infinite reason to *rejoice* in it, yet while I am contemplating it, I seem to be looking down from some *stupendous* Precipice, whose *height* fills me with a *sacred* horror, and almost *oversets* my *Reason*. But Oh! the *amazing* love of the *Son of God* towards us, that he should put *himself* in *our* stead, and interpose his *own* Breast as a *living* Shield between *ours* and his Father's *Vengeance*! Which, considering the *greatness* of *his* Person, and of *our* unworthiness, is such a *stupendous* Expression of *Love*, as no *Romance* of *Friendship* ever thought of! And what is the proper *influence* of all this Love, but to *oblige* us for ever to *God* and our *Saviour*, in the *bands* of a *reciprocal* Affection; to *melt* down our *stubbornness* and *enmity* against them, and *draw* us on to our *Duty* with the *Cords* of an *invincible* Endearment? For is it possible my *Sins* should be as *dear* to *me* as the *Son*

my God was to his own *Father*; and yet the Father left *him* out of love to *me*, and shall not I leave *them* out of love to *him*? And when the Son of God hath been so *kind* to *me*, as to lay down his *Life* for me, can I be so *ingrateful* to *him*, as to *doat* upon those *Sins* which he *hated* more than all the *shame* and *torment* which he endured on *their* account; *those* Sins that were the *cause* of all his *Sufferings*, the *Thorns* that gored his Temples, and the *Nails* that pierced his Hands and Feet? Sure if we are not utterly *lost* to all that is *modest* and *ingenuous*, *tender*, or *apprehensive* in Humane Nature, it will be impossible for us to *resist* these *endearing* Instances of the *love* of *God* and our *Saviour*, which carry *warmth* and *fervour* enough with them to *melt* the most *obdurate* Natures.

Fourthly, Christ's Death and Sacrifice is also to be considered as a *sure* and *certain* ground of our *hope* of *Pardon*, if we *repent* and *amend*. For it was upon the *virtue* of *Expiatory* Sacrifices, that all *Mankind* depended for their *Reconciliation* with God; and therefore *these* Sacrifices were a *principal* part not only of the Religion of the *Jews*, but of the *Gentiles* too, who besides their *Eucharistical*, had their constant *Expiatory* Oblations to *atone* and *pacify* their Gods. And this more especially in Times of Publick *Danger* and *Calamity*, when they conceived their Gods to be *most* offended with them; at which Seasons they were wont to offer up their most *costly* Sacrifices, and devote not only Hecatombs of *Beasts* to their Altars, but many Times the more precious Lives of *Men*, *Women*, and *Children*; imagining that the more *valuable* the Life was, the greater *virtue* there was in it to *appease* the *angry* Deity. And upon this sacred Rite did all the World build their *hope* of *Reconciliation* with God, as being conscious that by their Sin, they had *forfeited* their *own* Lives to him, and that there was no other way to *redeem* them, but by making a *commutation* with him, and offering him *another* Life for their *own*, which was therefore called ἀντίψυχος, *i. e.* a Life for their Life; and ἀντίλυτρον, *i. e.* the Price of their Redemption. But, alas! so miserably *defective* were the very *best* of their Sacrifices, that they could not rationally *depend* on them with any *confidence* or *assurance*. For as for the *Heathen* Sacrifices, God had never *promised* to *accept* them, and, it being an act of pure *grace* and *favour* in him to *admit* of such a *commutation*, it wholly depended on his own *good-will*, whether he would *admit* it or no; and, without some *express* revelation, it was impossible for them to know *which* way his Will was *determined* in the case. And then even their most *precious* Sacrifices, which were the Lives of *Men*, were infinitely *short* in value to *redeem* the *Lives* and *Souls* of those that offered them; those sacrificed *Men* being Sinners *themselves*, and they but a *few* Sinners for *many*. And as for the *Jewish* Sacrifices, tho God in many Cases had *promised* to *accept* them in commutation for the Lives of their *Bodies*; yet those being only the Lives of *Brutes*, which were but *negatively* innocent, as being *incapable* of *Sin* or *Virtue*, could *merit* nothing of God, and consequently were infinitely *short* of a *valuable* commutation for the *forfeited* Lives of their *Souls*. All which considered, there was no *relying* on them for *Redemption* from the Obligation they lay under to *eternal* Punishment. But now all these *Defects* are abundantly *supplied* in the Sacrifice of our blessed Saviour. For *his* Life was not only *infinitely* valuable by reason of his personal Union to the Godhead, and so in itself an *equivalent* Ransom; he was not only *no* Sinner, which the *best* of the *Heathen* Sacrifices were; he was not only *Negatively* innocent, which was all that the *Jewish* Sacrifices were; but he was also perfectly *Righteous*, and by virtue thereof infinitely *dear* and *acceptable* to God; and to crown all, God himself both by express *Revelation*, and by *raising* him from the *dead*, hath openly declared his *acceptance* of his precious Blood, as a *Ransom* for the Sins of the World. And, upon this most *sure* and *certain* ground, stands our *hope* of *Pardon* and *Reconciliation* with God. So that in the precious Blood of this our *meritorious* and *accepted* Sacrifice, we openly behold the *Mercy* of God, *inviting* us into *grace*

and

and *Favour*, and with *out-stretched* Arms ready to *receive* and *embrace* us; which gives us the most effectual *Encouragement* in the World to return to our Duty. I confess, if we had no *such* Sacrifice to depend on, the Sense of our *past* Guilts might justly *discourage* us from all Thoughts of *future* Repentance; for though the natural *Goodness* and *Benignity* of God might happily give us some *small* hope, yet, on the other hand, the Consideration of his natural *Abhorrence* of *Sin*, and the mighty Obligations he lies under to *punish* it, as he is a *wise* and *righteous* Governour, would very much *dash* our Hope out of *Countenance*. So that the utmost *Encouragement* we should have, would be that which the King of *Nineveh* gave his People, *Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce Anger, that we perish not?* Jonah iii. 9. But *now* we can certainly *tell*, that if *we* will turn from *our* Sins, *he* will turn from *his* Anger; for our Hope depends not on a doubtful *Peradventure*, but upon a *full*, *perfect*, and *sufficient* Sacrifice, *paid down* to, and *accepted* of God. What then should hinder *us* from *returning* to him, who are thus *firmly* assured of his gracious *Reception*, and do *certainly* know before-hand, that all our *past* Provocations shall be *blotted out*, and our *penitent* Souls *embraced* with the same *Grace* and *Favour* as if we had *never* offended?

Fifthly, and *lastly*, This Sacrifice of Christ is also to be considered as the *Seal* and *Confirmation* of the *New* Covenant: For thus of old, *Covenants* between God and Men were wont to be *sealed* and transacted by *Sacrifice*. So *Gen.* xv. *Abraham*, by God's Command, being to strike *Covenant* with him, offered a *Sacrifice*, which he *divided* in the middle, laying each *Moiety* one against the other, *between* which God passed in the likeness of a burning Lamp, and so made a Covenant with him, saying, *Unto thy Seed will I give this Land*; in which Rite of passing between the Parts, *God* condescended to the Manner of *Men*; for so the *Jews*, when they struck Covenant with God, were wont to cut the Sacrifice *in sunder*, and pass between the Parts thereof, *Jer.* xxxiv. 18, 19. by which Action they made this Imprecation on themselves, *Thus let me be divided and cut in pieces, if I violate the Oath I have now made.* And accordingly, the Blood of the Sacrifice is called by *Moses*, *The Blood of the Covenant*, Exod. xxiv. 8. and the *Jews* are said to *make a Covenant with God by Sacrifice*, Psal. l. 5. For all *Expiatory* Sacrifices were regularly attended with *Peace-offerings*, in both which the Priest or the People were God's *Guests*, and in token of *Reconciliation*, did *eat* and *drink* with him of the Provisions of his *Altar* or *Table*: For in the *Burnt-offerings*, the *Sin-offerings* and the *Trespass-offerings*, the *Priests* only, as the *Proxies* and *Representatives* of the People, were admitted to be God's *Guests*; but then in the *Peace-offerings*, which followed them, the People themselves were admitted to his *Table*, to partake with him of those *sacred* Viands. So that in the first, the *Priests*, as the Peoples *Representatives*, struck Covenant with God for them, in the second *they* struck Covenant with God for *themselves*. Thus, as it was the Custom of all Nations to solemnize their *Covenants* with one another, by *eating* together; so God, in *Condescension* to the manner of Men, and to *confirm* their *Faith* in his *Promises*, did, by the *same* Rite, engage himself in Covenant with them. And in the same manner the Sacrifice of our blessed Lord was a *Seal* and *Ratification* of the *New* Covenant; upon which account it is called, as the *Jewish* Sacrifices were, *the Blood of the Covenant*, Heb. x. 29. Heb. xiii. 20. For his Sacrifice upon the Cross was the meritorious *Sin-offering*, in which *he*, as the *High-Priest*, the *Head* and *Representative* of his Church, did solemnize the New Covenant between God and us, and obtained of his Father an inviolable *Ratification* of his *Promise* of *Grace* and *Eternal Life*: For in that *dreadful* Transaction God did *solemnly* engage himself to Christ in the behalf of his Church, to perform to her what he had *promised*, to the *utmost*, upon the *Terms* specified in the New Covenant. And therefore Christ is said to have *made Reconciliation in his own Body on the Cross, and to have slain the Enmity thereon*, Eph. ii. 16. and to have *made Peace*, that is, a Covenant of *Peace*, *through the Blood of the Cross*, Col. i. 20. But then to this *Sin-offering* there follows

a *Peace-offering*, and that is the *Lord's Supper*, in which the Church, for *herself*, by *eating* and *drinking* at this his Table, strikes *Covenant* with God; and upon those holy *Signs* of Christ's *Body* and *Blood*, gives to, and receives from God Assurance of mutual *Amnesty* and *Friendship*; and hence, 1 *Cor.* x. 16, 20. this holy Supper is call'd *The Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ*, and *drinking the Cup of the Lord*, and *being Partakers of the Table of the Lord:* For when God, in this Supper, doth, by the Hand of his Priest, *present* his *Bread* and *Wine* to us, he doth thereby *renew* his *Covenant* with us, and when we *receive*, and *eat* and *drink* God's Viands, *we* thereby renew our Covenant with him. Thus God, in great Condescension to our *desponding* Minds, hath been pleased to ratify his *Covenant* with us in our own way and manner; not that this Ratification doth render his Covenant surer in itself, for nothing can be surer than his Promise; and yet for the *Confirmation* of our *diffident* Minds, he is sometimes pleased to add his *Oath* to his *Promise*; and, for the same Reason, to his *Promise* and *Oath* he hath super-added these *federal* Ratifications, which being the same with those legal *Forms* and *Rituals* by which *Men* were wont to ratify *their* Covenants and Agreements with one another, are upon that Account more apt to assure and confirm our Minds. And now what a mighty Influence must this solemn *Confirmation* of the *New* Covenant have upon us, to *excite* and *quicken* our Piety and Virtue, and render us *actively zealous* of good Works? For, when God hath not only *owned* the *New* Covenant, by the many *miraculous* Attestations he hath given it; but hath also vouchsafed, by all those *federal* Rites, that were most sacred among Men, to oblige himself to perform it, we have abundant reason to believe not only that it is he that hath *promised* all the good Things of this Covenant; but also that he is fully *resolved* to *perform* those Promises to us, if we perform the *Conditions* of them; since, by the *Blood* of his own Son, he hath engaged himself to him in our behalf; and by the *sacramental* Signs of the Body and Blood of his Son, he has engaged himself to us in our *own* Persons, to perform what he has promised, to the utmost Punctilio. So that now our Faith in the Covenant stands upon a *firm* and *immoveable* Foundation, as having not only the *Promise* and the *Oath*, but also the Seal of God to depend on; and having all the good Things of the Covenant thus solemnly *consigned* to us, what abundant *Encouragement* doth it give us to return to *God* and our *Duty?* For now we are not only assur'd of his *Pardon* and *gracious Reception*, but also of the *Assistance* of his *Blessed Spirit* to *back* and *enforce* our *pious* Endeavours, and to *enable* us to conquer all those Resistances of Flesh and Blood, with which we are to contend; and to encourage us to contend with *all* our might, we have an *immortal* Crown of Glory *propos'd* to us as the Reward of our *Victory*, and are firmly *assured*, that after we have spent a few Moments here in the Practice of Piety and Virtue, we shall be removed from hence into that *triumphant* State of *Immortality*, there to reign in unspeakable *Glory* and *Delight*, among the blessed *Conquerors* above, and sing *Hallelujahs* with them *for ever*. For to all these *blessed* Things we are entitled by the *Ratifications* of the *New* Covenant. Having therefore these *great* and *precious* Promises *sealed* to us by the *Blood of Jesus*, *Let us cleanse ourselves from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of the Lord*, 2 Cor. vii. 1.

And thus you see how effectually the Death of Christ, as it is a *Sacrifice* for Sin, *contributes* to our *Reformation*. But after all, it must be acknowledged that it contributes only as a concurrent Cause with our own Endeavours; it doth not work upon us as if we were dead Machines, that have no *Free-will* or Principle of *Self-determination*; it *draws* us indeed, but it is with *the Cords of a Man*, *i. e.* with a powerful *Grace* and *Persuasion*, but doth not *drive* or *hale* us with *violent* or *irresistible* Agency: For, after all the *powerful* Influence of his Death to *reform* and *amend* us, we are still in our *own* Disposal; and so may *resist* and *baffle* the Efficacy of his Death, and in *despite* of it, continue in our Wickedness if we *please*. But if we do, it is at our own *eternal* Peril, and we must one Day expect to

anſwer, not only for the Blood of our *own* Souls, which, in deſpite of the moſt *powerful* Method of ſaving them, we have wilfully *ruined* and *deſtroyed*; but alſo for the Blood of our *Saviour*, which we have not only *defeated*, but *trampled on:* and if *both* theſe be brought to our Account, it had been better for us, not only that *we* had never been born, but that our Saviour himſelf had never been born, ſince all that he has done to ſave us, will be brought in Judgment againſt us, as an horrid *Aggravation* of our *Guilt*, to *inflame* the Reckoning of our *Puniſhment*. So that unleſs we concur with this great *Deſign* of Chriſt, by endeavouring our own *Reformation* to the utmoſt of our *Power*, his Death will not only be as inſignificant to *our* Happineſs, as it is to the Redemption of *Devils*; but even thoſe *vocal Wounds* of his, which were made to *plead for*, will *accuſe* and *condemn* us, and that *eloquent* Blood, which in its Native Language ſpeaks better Things for us than the Blood of *Abel*, will, like the Souls under the Altar, raiſe a Cry of Vengeance on us as high as the Tribunal of God. Wherefore, as we would not find this bleſſed *Sacrifice*, which was deſigned for our *City of Refuge*, converted into an *Avenger of Blood*, let us diligently concur with it to our utmoſt Power, in this neceſſary Deſign of our Reformation, that ſo being waſhed white and clean in the *Blood* of it, we may appear before God *holy, and unblameable, and unreproveable in his ſight*. And thus I have given an Account of the *firſt* Act of Chriſt's *Prieſthood*, *viz.* his *Sacrifice*.

SECT. VI.

Of Chriſt's Interceſſion, *or* preſenting *his* Sacrifice *to God in Heaven, by way of* Advocation *for us.*

I Now proceed to the *ſecond* Act of our Saviour's *Prieſthood*, correſponding to that ancient Prieſthood, in which it was *typified* and *prefigured*, *viz.* his *preſenting* his *Sacrifice* to God in Heaven, thereby to *move* God, as our *Advocate*, to be *merciful* and *propitious* to us. In diſcourſing of which, I ſhall endeavour,

Firſt, To *explain* the *Nature* of that *Advocation*, which he performs by *preſenting* his *ſacrificed Body* in Heaven.

Secondly, To ſhew the *admirable* Tendency of *this* Method of God's communicating his *Graces* and *Favour* to us, through the *Interceſſion* and *Advocation* of our Saviour, to *reduce* and *reform* Mankind.

As for the *Firſt*, viz. The *Nature* of this our Saviour's *Advocation* for us in Heaven, it may be thus defined, *It is a ſolemn Addreſs of our bleſſed Saviour to God the Father in our behalf, wherein by preſenting to him his own ſacrificed Body, and by continuing and perpetuating the Preſentation of it, he doth effectually move and ſolicite him graciouſly to receive and accept our Prayer, and to impower him to beſtow on us all thoſe Graces and Favours, which, in conſideration of his Sacrifice, God hath promiſed to us:* For the better underſtanding of which Definition, I ſhall diſtinctly explain the ſeveral Parts of it, which are theſe Four;

Firſt, It is a *ſolemn Addreſs* of our bleſſed Saviour to God the Father, in our behalf.

Secondly, This Addreſs is performed by the *preſenting* his *Sacrificed Body* to the Father in *Heaven*.

Thirdly, It is *continued* and *perpetuated* by the *perpetual* Oblation or preſenting of this his ſacrificed Body.

Fourthly, In *virtue* of this perpetual Oblation, he doth always *ſucceſsfully move* and *ſolicite* God; and this;

Firſt, To *receive* and graciouſly *accept* our *ſincere* and *hearty* Prayers; and

Secondly, To *impower* him to beſtow on us all thoſe *Graces* and *Favours*, which, in conſideration of his *Sacrifice*, God hath promiſed to us.

I. This *Advocation* of Chriſt in *Heaven* is a *ſolemn Addreſs* to the Father in *our* behalf. And this is implied in the very Word *Advocation*; for the proper Buſineſs of an *Advocate* is to *addreſs* in the behalf of his *Client* to the *Party* with whom he is concerned; or to plead the *Cauſe* of his Client with ſome Perſon, with whom he has ſome *Difference*, or from whom he expects ſome *Favour*. Now St. *John* tells us, that *we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous*, 1 John ii. 1. which muſt therefore neceſſarily imply his *addreſſing* to the Father in our behalf, in order to the *compoſing* that *Difference* which Sin hath made between *him* and *us*, and to the *obtaining* for *us* his *Mercy* and *Favour:* For in this Senſe the Greek Word παράκλητος, which we here render *Advocate*, is generally uſed among all Authors, *vid. Outram de Sacrif. p.* 360. And ſo alſo the Word *Interceſſion* ſignifies, to addreſs *for* one Perſon to another, in order to the *reconciling* ſome matter of *Difference* between them, or to the *obtaining* from the one ſome Favour for the other: And therefore ſince Jeſus Chriſt is ſaid to *intercede for us at the right Hand of God*, Rom. viii. 34. this Interceſſion alſo muſt neceſſarily imply his making *Application* to God in our behalf: For ſo the Phraſe ἐντυγχάνειν ὑπὲρ, which we render to *intercede* for, ſignifies to *advocate* or *plead* the Cauſe of another; as on the contrary ἐντυγχάνειν κατ' doth always ſignify to *accuſe*, *Rom.* xi. 2. 1 *Maccab.* viii. 32. and 1 *Maccab.* x. 61. and 1 *Maccab.* xi. 25. And conſequently, when our Saviour is ſaid ἐντυγχάνειν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, it muſt neceſſarily denote his *addreſſing* himſelf to God as our *Advocate*, to *plead* our *Cauſe*, and *ſolicite* our *Intereſt*; and accordingly, *Heb.* ix. 24. we are told, that Chriſt *is entred into Heaven itſelf, now to appear in the Preſence of God for us*; which Phraſe cannot, without infinite Force, be otherwiſe underſtood, than of his *appearing* for us as our *Advocate* to God. By all which it appears, that in this his *Interceſſion* for us, our Saviour *Addreſſes* to God the Father, from whoſe *bountiful* Hands he procures and receives all thoſe *Bleſſings* and *Favours* which he *derives* to us. So that the Father is the *Fountain* whence all our Bleſſings *flow*, and the Son is the *Channel* that *receives* them thence, and *conveys* them down to us: For, as he is *Mediator*, the Son can *beſtow* nothing on us in his own right, *independently* from the Father, whoſe *Miniſter* he is, and by whoſe *Commiſſion* and *Authority* he acts: And ſince they are all his *Father's* Goods which he *beſtows* upon us, he cannot *juſtly* beſtow them without his *Leave* and *Conſent*, the *obtaining* of which is the great Buſineſs of his *Interceſſion*, whereby he continually *moves* and *ſolicites* the Father to *grant* to him thoſe good Things in our Behalf, which, as the *high Almoner* of the Father's *Graces* and *Favours*, he beſtows upon us. So that whatſoever he gives *us*, he receives of the *Father*, and whatſoever he receives of the Father, he procures by his Interceſſion *with*, and Addreſs *to* him in our behalf.

II. This Addreſs is performed by the *preſenting* his *ſacrificed Body* to the Father in *Heaven:* For thus, as was ſhewed before, the High Prieſt's Addreſs to *God*, for the *People*, conſiſted in *preſenting* the *Blood* of the *Sacrifice* to him, in ſprinkling it *upon* and *before* the *Mercy-Seat*, which was the *Throne* of the *Divine Majeſty:* For he made no *vocal* Prayer for them in the *Holy of Holies*, and conſequently he performed not his *Interceſſion* by *Words*, but by *Actions*; and the *principal* Action he performed there was *ſprinkling* the Blood of the *Sacrifice*, which Action was a very *ſignificant* Interceſſion, importing *this* Senſe, *O God, I beſeech thee, accept this Blood which I offer thee for the Lives of thy People which are forfeited to thee.* And accordingly our Bleſſed Saviour, after he had offered up himſelf a Sacrifice for our Sins upon *Earth*, aſcends into *Heaven*, the true *Antitype* of the *Holy of Holies*, and there preſents not his *Blood* but his *ſacrificed Body* to the Father; *that* Body which not long before *bled* and *died* on the Croſs, and which, as it ſeems *probable*, carried with it all the *Wounds* it received in its *Crucifixon*; for by the Story of *Thomas*, it is *certain* it

it retained them after its *Reſurrection.* And by thus *preſenting* his *ſacrificed Body* to the Father, he did what the High Prieſt did, when he *ſprinkled* the *Blood* of his *Sacrifice, i. e.* he *interceded* for us with God; and indeed he interceded more *prevalently* by this ſignificant Action, than if he had uſed all the *Eloquence* of Men and Angels. For his Wounds are *vocal,* and his Blood *ſpeaks*; yea, and not only *ſpeaks better things for us than the Blood of Abel* ſpoke, but alſo expreſſes what it ſpeaks, far more *powerfully* and *emphatically* than it is poſſible for any *verbal* Oratory to do. So that by the preſenting to his Father his *wounded* and *bleeding* Body, which carries with it an *inexhauſtible* Fountain of *Rhetorick* and *Perſuaſion,* he makes the moſt *moving* and *pathetical* interceſſion for us; the *ſenſe* of which is this, though the full *Force* and *Emphaſis* of it no Language can expreſs, *O my Father, behold this Sacrificed Body of mine, which by thy conſent and approbation, hath been ſubſtituted to bear the Puniſhment which was due to thee from Mankind; and through the Wounds of which I have chearfully poured out the precious Blood of God, as a Ranſom for the Sins of the World; for the ſake of this Blood, therefore, be thou ſo far propitious to thoſe miſerable Sinners it was ſhed for, as, upon condition they ſhall repent, to accept it in exchange for the Lives of their Souls which are forfeited to thee, to releaſe them from the Obligation they are under to die eternally, and upon their final perſeverance in well-doing to crown them with eternal Life: And that this Blood which at thy command I have willingly ſhed for them, may not, through their inability to repent and perſevere, be utterly ineffectual to them; O ſend thy Holy Spirit to aſſiſt their weak Faculties, to excite their Endeavours, and co-operate with them. This* is the *Language* of Chriſt's *ſacrificed Body* in Heaven, and *theſe* are the *better Things which his Blood beſpeaks for us.* For his Blood beſpeaks thoſe good Things for us in *Heaven,* for which he ſhed it upon *Earth, i. e.* the remiſſion of our *Sins* and our *Eternal Life*; of which Bleſſings his *Blood,* being the price that God had promiſed to *accept,* his *preſenting* it to him in Heaven not only ſpeaks for, but humbly demands them, as carrying with it the unanſwerable Claim of an accepted Price to a ſtated Purchaſe. So that this *addreſs* which Chriſt makes for us to God in Heaven is not performed by him after the manner of a *proſtrate* Supplicant, with bended Knees, up-lifted Hands, and *lowly* Supplications, but in ſuch a manner as comports with the Kingly Majeſty he is advanc'd to; and ſo as at the ſame time to aſſert his own *right* of *purchaſe* in the Bleſſings he addreſſes for, and yet to acknowledge God to be the ſupreme *fountain* and *diſpoſer* of them. And this, the Scripture tells us, he performs by *appearing in the preſence of God for us,* and *preſenting* his *ſacrificed Body* to him as a ſtanding motive to prevail with him to be propitious to us; and to crown us with all thoſe Graces and Favours in conſideration of which he laid down his Life for us. And accordingly he is ſaid to *offer himſelf* to God for us in Heaven, *Heb.* ix. 25. and to *offer his own Sacrifice, i. e.* to God in Heaven, *for Sin for ever,* Heb. x. 12. By which *offering* or *preſenting* his *Sacrifice* to God, he doth at once claim for us, by the *right* of his *purchaſe,* all thoſe *good* Things for which he paid down the price of his Blood, and alſo by a ſilent deſire pray to God to beſtow them upon us, whereby he acknowledges him to be the ſovereign *Diſpoſer* of them. So that this ſignificant action of Chriſt's *preſenting* his *ſacrificed Body* to God is both a *Claim* and a *Prayer,* or rather it is a Prayer *back'd* and *enforc'd* with a rightful Claim to the Bleſſings he prays for. For ſo, for that particular Bleſſing of the Spirit, he himſelf tells us, *I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever,* John xiv. 16. not that he offers up any other Prayer to the Father but what his Wounds and Blood *continually* make, which with *inceſſant* Importunity do move and ſolicite God in our behalf; but his meaning is this, by *preſenting* that *Sacrifice* to my Father in *Heaven,* which I am going to offer on the *Croſs,* and by which, among other Bleſſings, I ſhall *purchaſe* of my Father his *Holy Spirit* for you, I will *pray* him to ſend his *Holy Spirit* to you, I will *pray* him by my *Wounds* and *Blood,*

which

which are a thousand Times more *moving* and *eloquent* than any *vocal* Prayer I can offer in your behalf; for while they pray him to send his *Spirit* to you, they lay an undeniable *claim* to what they pray for, as being the *dear* and *inestimable* price by which I am *purchasing* his *Spirit* for you. From all which it is evident that this *address* which Christ now makes for us to his Father in Heaven, consists in the presenting his *sacrificed* Body to him, by which he both prays to him, and claims what he prays for.

III. It is by the continued and perpetual oblation or presentment of this his *sacrificed Body* to the Father, that Christ continues and perpetuates this his Address or Intercession in our behalf. For the *first* presenting or oblation of his sacrificed Body in Heaven, was the beginning and commencement of his Intercession, and the whole *progress* of his Intercession is nothing but that same oblation *continued* and *perpetuated.* For as the High Priest was interceding for the People all the Time that he was presenting the *blood* of the *Sacrifice* before the Lord, so Christ is interceding for us all the while that he is presenting his *sacrific'd Body* in Heaven. For it is by the presence of his sacrificed Body that he *intercedes,* and therefore *so long* as his Body is present in Heaven, *so long* he must be *interceding* by it in our behalf. So that, between the *Jewish* High Priest's Intercession and *Christ's,* there is *this* vast difference, that the former presented himself in the *Holy of Holies* with his Sacrifice, and consequently interceded by it, but *once a Year, viz.* on the *great* Day of *Expiation;* whereas the latter *continually* presents his Sacrifice in Heaven, and so doth *continually* intercede by it: and whereas the *Blood* which the High Priest presented was so *mean* and *inconsiderable,* that the whole *virtue* of it was still spent in one Act of Intercession, as not being available enough for him to intercede with it twice; insomuch that in every *new* Act of Intercession, he was still fain to present *new* Blood; the *Blood* of *Christ* was of that infinite *moment* and *value* as that, though he makes a *continued* and *perpetuated* Intercession by it, yet the *virtue* and *efficacy,* the *power* and *prevalency* of it with God remains *fresh* and *unimpaired,* so that he needs not sacrifice *again* that so he may have *new* Blood to present, but with that which he shed sixteen hundred Years ago, he *still* intercedes for us with the same effect and success as when he *first* presented it to his Father in Heaven. Upon which account there was no need *that he should offer himself often, as the High Priest entred into the Holy Place every Year, with Blood of others: for then must he have often suffered since the Foundation of the World; but now once in the end of the World hath he appeared to take away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself,* Heb. ix. 25, 26. So that Christ's *one* Sacrifice being of *perpetual* virtue and efficacy, and being, as *such, perpetually* presented to the Father in Heaven, he therewithal makes a *continued* and *uninterrupted* Intercession for us, and will *continue* to do so to the end of the World. Hence we are said to be *sanctified through the offering of the Body of Jesus once for all,* Heb. x. 10. And *whereas every Priest standeth daily ministring, and offering oftentimes the same Sacrifices, which can never take away Sin; this Man, after he had offered one Sacrifice for Sins, for ever sat down on the right Hand of God,* ver. 11, 12. And this *offering his one Sacrifice for Sins* in Heaven being *for ever,* it is a *perpetually* continued Act of Intercession for us. For so it is said that *he ever lives to make intercession for us,* Heb. vii. 25. *i. e.* he ever lives in Heaven, so as by his perpetual *presence* there to make perpetual *Intercession* for us. And upon the account of the *perpetuity* of this his Priestly Act of Intercession, he is said to have *an unchangeable Priesthood,* not barely *because he continues for ever,* for so he might have done and yet ceased to have been a *Priest,* but because he continues for ever exercising his Priesthood, or presenting his *Sacrifice,* Heb. vii. 24. And hence also he is said to be *a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedeck;* that is, not only to be a *Royal Priest,* as *Melchisedeck* was, which, as I shewed before, was the proper Character of *Melchisedeck's* Priesthood, but to be a Royal Priest *for ever,* Heb. vii. 17. For *Melchisedeck* was not only a *Royal Priest,* but also a *Type* or *Shadow* of an *eter-*

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nal Royal Priest; and that, as he was *without Father, and without Mother, without descent*, or Genealogy, *having neither beginning of Days, nor end of Life, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a Priest continually*, Heb. vii. 3. Where the Phrase ἀγενεαλόγητος *without descent*, or Genealogy, explains what is meant by *without Father and without Mother, i. e.* without any *Father* or *Mother* mentioned in the *Genealogies of Moses*; so the *Syriack* Version, *whose Father and Mother are neither of them recorded in the Genealogies*; in which he very much differed from the *Aaronical* Priests, whose Fathers and Mothers Names were constantly *recorded* in the *Jewish* Genealogies, as appears from *Esdr.* xi. 62. and so also *Philo* on the Decalogue tells us, Ἱερέως γὰρ τὸ γένος ἐξετάζεται μετὰ πάσης ἀκριβείας εἰ ἀνεπίληπτον, *i. e.* the Descent and Progeny of the Priests is kept with all manner of Exactness. So that there being *no* Genealogy at all of *Melchisedeck*, in Scripture, he is introduc'd into the History like a Man *dropt down from Heaven*, for so the Text goes on, *having neither beginning of Days nor end of Life, i. e.* in the History of *Moses*; which, contrary to its common usage, when it makes mention of great Men, takes no notice at all of the Time either of *Melchisedeck*'s *Birth* or *Death*; and herein he is *made like unto the Son of God, i. e.* by the History of *Moses*, which mentions him *appearing* and *acting* upon the *Stage*, without either *entrance* or *exit*, as if, like the Son of God, he had *abode a Priest continually.* So that as *Moses*'s History treats of *Melchisedeck*, without taking any notice of his beginning or end, as if he were a Royal Priest for ever; so *Christ* in truth and reality is a *Royal Priest* for ever, because by the *perpetual* Oblation and presenting his Sacrifice to the Father, he *perpetually* exercises his Priesthood, and makes a *continued* Intercession for Mankind.

IV. This Address being made by the *continued* Oblation or presenting of his *sacrificed Body* to the Father, is, in the *virtue* thereof, always *effectual* and *successful*. For his *Sacrifice*, as hath been shewn at large, was the *price* of his *Purchase* of those *Blessings* he intercedes for; the *price* which God, by a solemn *agreement* with our Saviour, had *obliged* himself to *admit* and *accept*. For the *only* Blessing he intercedes for, are those which are specified in the *New Covenant*, which New Covenant God granted to Mankind, in *Consideration* of the *meritorious* Death and Sacrifice of our Saviour; and accordingly when he went to *offer up* himself a Sacrifice for us, he tells us that it was κατὰ τὸ ὡρισμένον, *according to what was determined*, or *agreed on* between his Father and himself, *Luke* xxii. 22. And hence our Saviour tells us, that his Father, in Consideration of what he was to *suffer*, did διατίθεσθαι βασιλείαν *covenant to him a Kingdom*, Luke xxii. 29. which Kingdom includes a *Kingly* Power to bestow upon his faithful Subjects the *Rewards* of his *Religion*, which are the *Blessings* of the *New Covenant*; and of this Covenant, by which God obliged himself in Consideration of Christ's *Death*, to bestow this Kingly Power upon him, that of *Heb.* x. 7. seems to be intended, *Then said I, Lo I come, in the Volume of the Book it is written of me, to do thy Will, O God*; where κεφαλὶς βιβλίου, which we render the *Volume of the Book*, may perhaps be more truly translated the *Instrument, Indenture*, or *Covenant*, that is between thee and me. For so the *Hebrew* ספר, to which the *Greek* βιβλίον answers, signifieth any sort of *writing*, and particularly a *Bill*, Deut. xxiv. 1. according to which sense, κεφαλὶς βιβλίου must here signify the *volume* or *folding* of a *Bill*, or, which is all one, an *Indenture* or *Covenant*. When therefore he saith, *Lo I come*, in the *Indenture or Covenant which is between thee and me*, by which thou hast Bequeathed or Covenanted to me a *Kingdom*, or Power to bestow *such* and *such* Blessings on my faithful Subjects; in this Covenant, I say, it is express'd or *written*, that *I should come to do thy Will, i. e.* to offer up that *body* which *thou hast prepared for me*, a Sacrifice for the Sins of the World, *ver.* 5. And indeed how could it have been foretold of him, as it is *Isaiah* liii. that he should *justify many by bearing their Iniquities*, and that *he should see the travail of his Soul, i. e.* for our Salvation, *and be satisfied*, had not the Father *obliged* himself

himself by *Contract* and *Covenant*, to *justify* and *save* us, in *consideration* of his *Sacrifice?* And indeed this whole *Prediction* carries with it a *Promise* from the Father to Christ, that upon the Consideration of his Death and Sacrifice, he should be *effectually* impowered to *save* and *justify us.*

Since therefore the *Sacrifice* of Christ was the great *consideration* upon which the Father *granted* to him the Blessings of the *New Covenant* in our behalf, and since it is by *presenting* that Sacrifice, and in the *virtue* of it, that he *intercedes* with the Father *for* those Blessings, we may confidently assure ourselves he cannot fail of *success*, because he intercedes with a *righteous* God, of whom by *presenting* to him the *consideration* of his *grant*, he hath acquired a *right* to *obtain* the Blessings he intercedes *for.* For *now* he intercedes for us with the *price* of our *Redemption* in his Hands, so that he doth not act *precariously*, or as a *mere* Orator, that *begs* and *supplicates* without any *claim*, and so may be *denied* and *rejected* without any *Injustice*; but whatsoever he *asks* he asks in the *right* of his *Sacrifice*, by *accepting* of which *inestimable* consideration, the Father hath *obliged* himself to *grant* what he asks *for.* So that *now* he cannot be *denied* those Favours, which he *craves* in our behalf, without manifest *Injustice*, because by mutual *Contract* between himself and his Father he hath *purchased* to himself a *right* to *obtain* them, and hath *bought* and *paid* for them with his own *Blood.* And how can we imagine that the most *Just* and *Holy* God can ever be so outragiously unjust to his own Son, as to be *deaf* to his *Intercessions*, while he intercedes in the right of that precious *Blood*, which his Son freely paid, and he as freely accepted, in consideration of those Blessings he intercedes for? It being therefore evident, by what hath been said, that the *Intercession* of Christ is a most *effectual* and *successful* address to the Father, to all the Intents and Purposes for which it is made, it now remains only that we give an account to what Intents and Purposes it is that he makes this address to the Father.

First therefore, It is to *move* and *solicite* him graciously to *receive* and *accept* our *sincere* and *hearty* Prayers; and,

Secondly, To obtain of him *Power* and *Authority* to *bestow* on us all those *Graces* and *Favours*, which, in consideration of his Sacrifice, God hath *promised* us.

I. One *Intent* or *Purpose* of Christ's making this address to the Father, is to *move* and *solicite* him graciously to *receive* and *accept* our *sincere* and *hearty* Prayers. For thus the *Incense* which the *Priests* offered *twice a Day* upon the *Golden Altar*, and which the *High Priest* offered *once a Year* in the *Holy of Holies*, was a *Symbol* or *Emblem* of the Prayers of the People, which they *mystically* offer'd up to God with it; and hence the Psalmist, *Let my Prayers be set forth before thee as Incense*, Psalm cxli 2. and St. *John* calls the Odours that filled the Golden Vials, *the Prayers of the Saints*, Rev. v. 8. and that the Prayers of the Saints were offer'd *with* the Incense upon the Golden Altar, is evident from *Rev.* viii. 3. And accordingly while the High Priest was offering the Incense in the *Holy of Holies*, the People in their Court offered up their *silent* and *mental* Prayers to God; for so *Ecclus.* l. 15, 18, 19, 21. we read that whilst *Simon* the High Priest was offering the Incense to God, *all the People fell on their Faces to the ground, and besought the Lord most High in Prayer, till the Ministry of the Lord was done, i. e.* till the High Priest had offered the Incense; and St. *Luke* makes mention of the *Peoples praying without in the time of Incense*, Luke i. 10. By all which it is evident, that this *fuming* of the *Incense* by the Priests and High Priest, was nothing but a *mystical* Oblation of those *Prayers* to God, which the People were pouring out while the *Mystery* was performing. Since therefore the High Priest was a *Type* of Christ, and his entrance into the *Holy of Holies* a *Type* of Christ's entrance into *Heaven*, his offering Incense there, which was a *mystical* Oblation of the *Prayers* of the People, must necessarily be a *Type* of Christ's *offering* and *recommending* our Prayers to his Father, which he promised his Disciples he would perform when he came

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to *Heaven*, John xvi. 26, 27. *In that Day ye ſhall ask in my Name, and I ſay not unto you that I will pray the Father for you*; which in our Saviour's Way of Expreſſion (which is, when he mentions *Two* Things, to *paſs by*, and ſeemingly *deny* the *one*, that ſo he may the more *illuſtrate* and *amplify* the *other*, *vide* John xii. 4. John v. 45, 46, 47.) plainly implies, that he would; *for the Father himſelf loveth you, becauſe ye have loved me.* And therefore it is *through him* that we are ſaid to *have acceſs unto the Father.* Eph. ii. 18. and *by him to have acceſs to Divine Grace*, Rom. v. 2. and *in him to have boldneſs and acceſs with Confidence*, Eph. iii. 12. and Rev. viii. 3. he is repreſented as that *Angel* of the Covenant, *who, at the Golden Altar before God, doth offer up the Prayers of the Saints*, incenſed by the Merit of his Sacrifice. For it is the Sacrifice of Jeſus that *hallows* and *conſecrates* all our *Prayers* and *good Works*; the beſt of which have ſo many *ſinful* Defects and Imperfections cleaving to them, as would render them abominable to the pure and holy God, were they not purged and expiated by this great *Propitiation.* And though Prayer be a Duty we ſtand eternally obliged to, by our continual Dependance upon God, yet in this Degeneracy of our Nature, there are ſo many Sins do ſtill accompany our Prayers, as that were they not expiated by ſome very *acceptable* and *meritorious* Satisfaction, the Cry of them would drown the Cry of our *Prayers*, and for ever hinder their Acceſs to the divine *Ear* and *Acceptance.* So that it is only in the virtue of that Sacrifice with which our Saviour intercedes for us in *Heaven*, that our Prayers have admittance thither; it is his *Blood* alone that purifies our polluted Supplications, and out-cries the Guilt of thoſe Sins that go along with them. For by *preſenting* that Sacrifice to his Father, with which he made *ſatisfaction* for our Sins on the *Croſs*, he continually *moves* and *ſolicites* that thoſe ſinful Defects which cleave to our Prayers may be pardoned and remitted; upon which Motion of his, our Prayers are continually purged from the Guilt of thoſe Defects, and thereupon introduced into the divine acceptance as *pure* and *innocent*, *ſpotleſs* and *unblemiſhed* Devotions. And as by preſenting his Sacrifice he purges the guilt of our Prayers, ſo he enforces and ſeconds them. For, as hath been ſhewn before, the very preſenting his Sacrifice is a *Symbolical* Prayer for thoſe very Bleſſings which we pray for, and not only ſo, but a Prayer that is enforced with a juſt claim, and doth plead the Right or *Purchaſe* to all the Bleſſings it ſues for, and ſo cannot juſtly be denied or rejected. And when he thus prays with us, and continually *joins* the cry of his *Blood* to the cry of our *Prayers*, we may ſafely depend upon it, that we ſhall prevail, and find free acceſs to the Throne of God's grace and acceptance. And hence we are ſaid to *have boldneſs to enter into the Holy of Holies*, that is, to draw near, by Prayer, to God, *by the Blood of Jeſus, by a new and living way which he hath conſecrated for us through the vail, that is to ſay, his Fleſh*, Heb. x. 19, 20. And our Saviour himſelf aſſures us, that *whatſoever we ſhall ask in his name, he will do it*; and again he repeats, *If you ſhall ask any thing in my name I will do it*, John xiv. 13, 14. that is, he will procure it for us, by joyning his Interceſſions with our Prayers; for ſo, *ver.* 16. he explains himſelf, *I will pray the Father.*

II. The other intent and purpoſe of his making this *Addreſs* or *Interceſſion* for us to the Father, is, to obtain of him Power and Authority to *beſtow* on us all thoſe *Graces* and *Favours* which, in conſideration of his Sacrifice, God hath promiſed us. It is not to move the Father to beſtow on us the Bleſſings of the New Covenant *immediately with his own hand* that our Saviour intercedes, but to impower *himſelf*, as *Mediator* between the Father and us, to beſtow them upon us, according to the Terms and Conditions upon which they are propoſed to us. For though it is moſt certainly true, that *every good and perfect gift comes down from above, even from the Father of Light*; yet it is as certain that they come not down to us from the Father immediately, but are all derived to us through the Hands of the Son, who by his continual Interceſſion obtains continual Power and Authority of the Father, to derive

and confer on us all those Heavenly Gifts. So that as the *High Priest*, when he had presented the Blood of the Sacrifice in the *Holy of Holies*, was *authorized* by God to bless the People, *vide* 1 *Chron.* xxiii. 13. even so our blessed Saviour, by presenting his *meritorious Sacrifice* in *Heaven*, and in the *virtue* thereof interceding for us with the Father, is *continually* authorized by him *effectually* to *bless us*, *i. e.* to confer on us the Blessings of the *New Covenant* upon the Terms and Conditions that they are therein *proposed*. For this Power he obtains of God by his perpetual Intercession, and hence he is said to be *able to save all those to the utmost that come unto God by him*, *seeing he ever lives to make intercession for us*, Heb. vii. 25. where his *power*, or *ability to save us to the utmost*, *i. e.* to confer on us all the Blessings of the *New Covenant*, is expresly attributed to his *ever living to make Intercession for us*; which is a plain Argument, that the *intent* of his *Intercession* is to *move* God to *authorize* him to save us; seeing that, in answer to his *Intercession*, he is continually *impowered* and *authorized* thereunto. For it is to be considered, that this *Power* and *Authority*, and the Exercise of it, appertains to his *Kingly* Office, which he first arrived to, and still continues in, by virtue of his *Intercession*; and indeed herein consists the *Royalty* of his *Priesthood*, in that by interceding for us as Priest in the virtue of his *Sacrifice*, and continuing to do so, he first obtained and still continues vested with *Kingly Power* and *Authority*, to bestow on us those Heavenly Blessings he intercedes for; and it is to this purpose that he intercedes, not that the Father would bestow them on us immediately, but that he would put and continue it in *his* Power to bestow them, as *Mediator* between the Father and us; so that he acquired and holds this *Royalty* by his *Priesthood*, and that *Kingly Power*, by which he gives the Blessings of the New Covenant, God gave and continues to him by way of Answer and Return to his *Priestly Intercession*. And hence he is said upon his *offering one Sacrifice for Sin for ever*, *i. e.* upon the perpetual Oblation of his Sacrifice in Heaven, to have *sat down on the right hand of God*, *i. e.* in the Throne of his *Kingly Power* and *Authority*, Heb. x. 12. and accordingly, *Eph.* iv. 8. we are told, that upon his *ascending up on high*, *i. e.* to present his sacrificed Body in Heaven, *he led captivity captive, and gave Gifts unto Men*, which necessarily implies, that he had received Power and Authority from his Father to *give* them; and so *Psal.* lxviii. 18 whence these Words are quoted, expresses it, *He received Gifts for Men*, *i. e.* upon the *presenting* his *Sacrifice*, as *Priest*, he received of the Father those Gifts for Men, which by his *Kingly* Power he afterwards *distributed* among them. So that what he *gives* by his *Kingly* Power, he receives by his *Priestly*, and both the Gifts which he gives, and the Authority by which he gives them, are the Fruits and Returns of that *perpetual* Intercession which he makes by his Sacrifice. And that by his *Intercession* our Saviour hath required this Royal Power of giving us the *Blessings* of the *New Covenant*, he himself doth plainly enough intimate; for thus of the *Spirit*, which is one of those great Blessings, he tells his Disciples, *It is expedient for you that I go away*, *i. e.* to Heaven, to intercede for you; *for if I go not away*, *the Comforter will not come*, *i. e.* he will not come upon my Intercession; *but if I depart I will send him unto you*, namely, by that *Royal Authority* which upon my Intercession I shall receive from the Father, *John* xvi. 7. And accordingly St. *Peter* tells the *Jews*, that Christ *being exalted by the right hand of God*, *and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost*, *i. e.* upon his Intercession in Heaven, *he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear*, *i. e.* the miraculous Virtues of the Holy Ghost, *Acts* ii. 33. And so for *Remission of Sins*, he tells us, that *he hath the Keys of Hell and Death*, Rev. i. 18. *i. e.* power to *bind* or *loose*, to *pardon* or *condemn*; and lastly, for *Eternal* Life, he expresly tells the Church of *Laodicea*, *To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me on my Throne, even as I have overcome, and am set down with my Father on his*, Rev. iii. 21. By all which it is abundantly evident, that Christ hath a *Royal* Power *delegated* to him from the Father upon his *Intercession*, to grant and bestow all the Blessings of

the *New Covenant* upon those that comply with its Terms and Conditions. For so all the *Graces* and *Favours* of God are in Scripture said to be derived *in, by,* or *through* Jesus Christ; for so *Eph.* i. 3. God the Father is said to *bless us with all spiritual Blessings in or through Christ*; and *Rom.* vi. 23. *Eternal Life* is said to be *the Gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord*; and we are said to be *Heirs of God,* or Inheritors of his Blessings *through Christ,* Gal. iv. 7. which plainly implies, that though it is from God the Father originally that all our Mercies are derived, yet it is through God the Son *immediately* that they are derived to *us,* and that whatsoever God bestows upon us, he bestows by the hand of Jesus Christ, whom upon his *first* Oblation of his precious Sacrifice in Heaven, and continual Intercession with it, he constitutes and continues the *Royal distributer* of all his *Graces* and *Favours* to the World. And therefore, since there is no doubt but that *that* which he obtains by his *Intercession* is the thing which he intercedes for, it necessarily follows, that the thing which he intercedes for, is *Power* to *bestow* on us the Blessings of the *New Covenant,* because he hath actually obtained that Power by his *Intercession.*

Having thus given as *plain,* and as *brief* an Account as I could of this *second* Priestly Act of our Saviour, *viz.* his *Intercession* for us in *Heaven* by the continual Oblation of his Sacrifice there, I proceed in the *second* place to shew the *admirable* tendency of this Method, of God's communicating his *Graces* and *Favours* to us through the *Intercession* of our Saviour, to reduce and reform Mankind; which will plainly appear by considering the following Particulars:

First, This Method naturally tends to excite in us a mighty *awe* and *reverence* of God's *Majesty.*

Secondly, It also tends to give us the *strongest* Conviction of God's *hatred* and *abhorrence* of our *Sins.*

Thirdly, It also tends most effectually to *secure* us from *presuming* upon God's *Mercy,* while we *continue* in our *Sins.*

Fourthly, It tends to encourage us to *draw near* to God with *Chearfulness* and *Freedom.*

Fifthly, It tends to give us the most ample assurance of his *gracious* Intentions towards us, if we *repent* and *return* to our Duty.

I. This Method of God's communicating his Favours to us through our Saviour's Intercession, is naturally apt to excite in us a mighty *awe* and *reverence* of the *Divine Majesty.* For in this degenerate Condition wherein our Nature is inverted and turned *upside down,* and our sensitive Faculties have got the Ascendant of our Reason, *rational* Objects have incomparably less force on, and prevalence with us than *material* and *sensitive.* And hence it is that we are so unapt to be affected with the *Majesty* of God, though in itself infinite and incomprehensible, because it being *purely spiritual,* is objected only to our Faith and Reason, and doth not *strike* upon our Sense with the Rays of a visible Glory. And hence it was that, under the *Old Testament,* God so frequently exhibited himself to Mens Eyes, in sensible Appearances; as particularly sometimes in humane *shape,* and sometimes in a *Body of light* or of *shining flame,* that so by making an impression of his great Majesty on their sense, he might affect them with suitable *awe* and *dread* of it. And for the same reason that he *convers'd* with them in these *sensible* appearances, he also *treated* with them by a *Mediator on* Mount *Sinai:* For God commanded that Bounds should be set round about the Mountain, which the People were forbid upon peril of Death *to break through unto the Lord to gaze*; and only *Moses,* their *Mediator,* together with his Brother *Aaron,* were permitted to ascend the Mount, and to have immediate access to him: and by thus keeping them at a distance from his *sacred* Presence, and only suffering them to approach him by their *Mediator,* he took an effectual course to

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inſpire their Minds with a reverential *awe* of his *Divine Majeſty:* which is in itſelf ſo infinitely *Sacred* and *Auguſt*, that it ſeems it would have been a high *Prophanation* in them to have converſed with it *immediately*. And accordingly God, by keeping *us* at a *diſtance* from him, and allowing *us* to have *acceſs* to him only by our *Mediator*, expreſſes the *greatneſs* of his *Majeſty*, which is too *ſacred* to be mingled in Converſation with *us*, too *ſublime* to admit of the *immediate* addreſſes of poor Mortals, yea, and which no Mortal muſt approach without the *Mediation* of his own *Eternal Son*; for thus *Plato* in his *Sympoſ.* gives it as an Inſtance of the Majeſty of God, Θεὸς ἀνθρώπῳ ὐ μίγνυται, ἀλλὰ διὰ Δαιμονίων πᾶσά ἐστιν ὁμιλία καὶ ἡ διάλεκτος Θεοῖς πρὸς ἀνθρώπους, *i. e.* God doth not mingle himſelf with Men; but all the Converſe and Intercourſe between him and us is tranſacted by the Mediation of Demons. And if it were thought ſo great an Inſtance of God's *Majeſty*, that he would not be approached by us without the *Mediation* of *Angels*, to what an *infinite* height muſt he be *exalted* above us, when no *leſs* a Perſon than he who is *God-man* can ſo much as give us *acceſs* to him, or preſent our *Prayers* and *Supplications* at his Feet. O! what an *awful* Senſe therefore of the *Majeſty* of God ſhould this Conſideration beget in our Minds! For how can we think of him without *dread* and *reverence*, when we conſider how he is ſecluded by the infinite *ſacredneſs* of his own Majeſty from all immediate *converſe* and *intercourſe* with us, and how he is *exalted* ſo infinitely above us, as that we cannot have acceſs to him ſo much as by our *Prayers* and *Supplications* without the interpoſition of a *Mediator*, who is *greater* than the greateſt of all the *Kings* on *Earth*, or *Angels* in *Heaven*? Surely he who can *thus* think of God without being *ſtruck* into a profound *awe* and *reverence* of his Majeſty, muſt have a mind ſo *hardned* againſt all the *impreſſions* of *Reaſon*, as that no *wiſe* thought can ever move or affect it.

II. This Method of God's communicating his Favours to us, through our Saviour's Interceſſion, tends alſo to give us the *ſtrongeſt* Conviction of God's *hatred* and *abhorrence* of our *Sins*. For doubtleſs, to convince us how *deeply* he *reſents* our *ſinful* behaviour towards him, the moſt effectual courſe he could take, next to that of *baniſhing* us from his preſence *for ever*, was to *exclude* us from all *immediate* intercourſe with him, and not to admit of any more *Addreſſes* or *Supplications* from us but by the hand of ſome *Mediator*. Hereby he plainly demonſtrates how infinitely pure and abhorrent to Sin his Nature is, that he will not ſuffer a *ſinful* Creature to come near him but by *Proxy*, nor *accept* of a *ſervice* from a *guilty* hand, nor *liſten* to a *Prayer* from a *ſinful* Mouth, till it is firſt hallowed and preſented to him by a *pure* and *holy* Mediator. If therefore we are not infinitely *conceited* of ourſelves, this procedure of his cannot but lay us *low* in our own Eyes, and make us deeply ſenſible of our own *Vileneſs* and *Baſeneſs*. For how infinitely deteſtable muſt our *Sins* be in his Eyes, when notwithſtanding all his *kindneſs* and *benevolence* towards us, he keeps us at ſuch a diſtance from him, and will not be prevailed with, without ſome powerful Interceſſion, ſo much as to hear our *Prayers*, or to have any kind of Communication or Intercourſe with us? And accordingly you find, that when the three Friends of *Job* had treated him ſo *deſpitefully* and *uncharitably*, God, to manifeſt his *Diſpleaſure* againſt them, commands them to make uſe of *Job*'s Mediation, *Job* xlii. 7. *My wrath*, ſaith he to *Elephas*, *is kindled againſt thee, and againſt thy two Friends; for ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my Servant Job hath: therefore take unto you ſeven Bullocks and ſeven Rams, and go to my Servant Job, and offer up for yourſelves a burnt Offering, and my Servant Job ſhall pray for you, for him will I accept; leſt I deal with you after your Folly:* As if he ſhould have ſaid, that you may ſee how ill I reſent your ſevere and cruel uſage of that *good* Man, know, that if you offer to addreſs to me immediately for yourſelves, I will certainly throw your Prayers back upon your Faces; as therefore you hope to be *reſtored* to my *Favours*, go to that *injured* Friend of yours, and *beſeech* him to *mediate*

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for you, and I will hear him, though I will not hear you. And after the ſame manner doth God manifeſt his *high* diſpleaſure againſt our Sins, that he will not ſuffer us to *approach* him *immediately*, to preſent our *Petitions* to him with our own Hands, but will have them all preſented to him by a Hand that is more acceptable to him than our own, and not only ſo, but by the greateſt and moſt acceptable Hand in the World, even that of his own *Eternal Son*, the Son of his *eſſence* and *delight*, in whom he is *for ever well pleaſed*. For it is through him alone that we have acceſs to the Father, whom our Sins have ſo horribly incenſed againſt us that no *Advocate* in *Heaven* or *Earth*, leſs *great* and leſs *dear* to him than his own Son, can prevail with him, to be *reconciled* to us upon our moſt *unfeigned* Repentance, or ſo much as to accept of our *humble* Supplications. O good God! what a woful diſtance have my Sins made between *thee* and *me*, that notwithſtanding the infinite *goodneſs* and *benignity* of thy Nature, I cannot be admitted to thee, nor *expect* any *favour* at thy Hands upon any *leſs* powerful *intereſt* or *application* than that of thine only begotten Son! But, O *ſtupid* Creature that I am, to make *light* of thoſe Sins that have ſo highly *incenſed* thee againſt me, that none in Heaven or Earth but only *that* dearly beloved Son can *prevail* with thee to caſt a *propitious* eye on me, or ſo much as to give me *acceſs* to the *foot-ſtool* of the *Throne* of thy Grace!

III. This way of God's communicating his Favours to us, *through* the Interceſſion of Chriſt, is alſo moſt apt to *ſecure* us from *preſuming* upon God's *Mercy*, while we *continue* in our *Sins*. There is no one Thing doth more univerſally *obſtruct* the *Reformation* of Men, than their confident Preſumption, that God will be *merciful* to them, notwithſtanding they perſiſt in their Rebellions againſt him: For all Men have a natural Notion of the infinite *Goodneſs* and *Benevolence* of the Divine Nature, together with which all bad Men have a *natural* Deſire to ſin without diſturbance: When therefore their *Conſcience* begins to *clamour* againſt their *Wickedneſs*, and to *vex* and *perſecute* them for it, the *Mercy* of God is the uſual *Sanctuary* they fly to Peace, *froward* Conſcience, cry they, God is a moſt *gracious* and *merciful* Being, hard to be provoked, and eaſy to be pacified; fear not, therefore, *his* Mercy is infinitely greater than *my* Faults, and I am ſure ſo *good* a God as he is can never find in his Heart to *deſtroy* his *Creature* and *Off-ſpring* for ſuch *Peccadillo*'s as theſe; with ſuch Preſumptions as theſe they commonly lull their Conſciences aſleep, and ſo ſin on ſecurely in deſpite of all the *Threats* and *Warnings* of Heaven that *thunder* about their Ears. Now to *prevent* ſuch Preſumptions as theſe, and *daſh* them quite out of *Countenance*, there is no Conſideration in the World can be more effectual than this, of God's communicating his Mercies to us *through* the *Interceſſion* of our Saviour: For if, notwithſtanding the *Goodneſs* of his Nature, he will not be propitious to us, no not upon our *Repentance*, without being *moved* thereunto by the *powerful* Interceſſion of his own Son, how can we ever expect that he ſhould be propitious to us whether we repent or no? Is it likely he ſhould be more indulgent to us for our *own* ſake, than he is for his Son's ſake and our own together; or that, when all that his Son can obtain for us, is to receive us into *Favour*, in Caſe we will lay down our *Arms*, that we, by our own Intereſt ſhould prevail with him to receive us while we perſiſt in our *Obſtinacy* and *Rebellion*; in ſhort, if our *Repentance*, which is the beſt Thing we can render him, be not ſufficient to move him to pardon us, without being ſeconded and enforc'd with the powerful *Oratory* of our Saviour's *Interceſſion*, what ſhould move him, when we have neither Repentance nor a *Saviour* to intercede for us? For our Saviour will not intercede for us, unleſs we repent; and our Repentance will not prevail for us, unleſs he intercede: What hope have we therefore, while we continue impenitent, when our Repentance itſelf, which is the beſt Thing we can do to move God to be propitious to us, is inſufficient without Chriſt's *Interceſſion*; and when, without our *Repentance*, Chriſt will not intercede for us;

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and if the *Tears* of a *penitent* Supplicant will not prevail with him, without an *Intercessor*, what hope is there that the *Efforts* of an *impenitent* Rebel should? But suppose we might reasonably presume upon the *Benignity* of God's *Nature*, that he will be propitious to us, *notwithstanding* our *Impenitence*, yet it is to be considered, that now he has placed the *Dispensation* of his *Mercy* in the Hand of a *Mediator*, who is not left to dispose of it *arbitrarily*, as he shall think fit, but is *confined* and *limited* to dispose of it, only to penitent Offenders: For Christ's *Trust* can extend no farther than to dispense God's Mercy to us, upon the Terms of that *Covenant*, of which he is *Mediator*, which Covenant proposes Mercy to us only upon condition of our *Repentance*. So that now we can expect no Mercy from God, but what passes through the Hands of Jesus our Mediator, who cannot, without violating his Trust, dispense the Mercy of God to us, except we *repent* and *amend:* For now God cannot dispense his Mercy to us immediately, without displacing his Son from his *Mediatorship*; and his *Son* cannot dispense his Mercy to us *unconditionally*, without *transgressing* the *Bounds* and *Limits* that are prescribed to him; and therefore since God hath restrained himself to dispense his Mercy only through his Son, and restrained his Son to dispense it only to *Penitents*, for us to presume upon the Mercy of God, while we continue *impenitent*, is the greatest Nonsense in the World: It is to suppose either that God will *cancel* the *Oeconomy* of his Mercy for our sakes, and *resume* the *Dispensation* of it immediately into his own Hands, merely to *favour* and encourage us in our Rebellion against him; or that Christ will *betray* the *Trust* which his Father hath reposed in him, and dispense his Mercy to us contrary to his Orders; that is, either that God the Father will *depose* his Son for our sakes, or that God the Son will be *unfaithful* to the Father for our sakes, both which Suppositions are equally *absurd* and *blasphemous*. Whilst therefore God proceeds with us in this *established* Method of granting his Mercy to us *only* through his Son, and confining his Son to dispense it to us *only* upon the Conditions of the *New Covenant*; to flatter ourselves with hopes of Mercy, while we continue impenitent, is to presume both against *Reason* and *Possibility*.

IV. This way of God's communicating his Favours to us, through the *Mediation* of Christ, is also most apt in itself to *encourage* us to approach him with *Chearfulness* and *Freedom:* For it is a *natural* Effect of Guilt to suggest to Mens Minds *dreadful* and *anxious* Thoughts of God, and whilst we are under *such* Thoughts of him, how is it possible for us to approach him *immediately*, and without any *Friend* or *Advocate* to *introduce* and *speak* for us, with any *Chearfulness* or *Freedom:* For, with what *Confidence* can I address to an *incensed* and *offended* God, purely upon my own *Fund* or *Interest*, when I am *conscious* of a thousand times more *evil* in me to *provoke* him against me, than of *good* to *recommend* me to his Favour? Unless therefore I am secured of some powerful Friend in Heaven, that is infinitely more *acceptable* to God than I can *modestly* hope to be, and that will *agitate* for me, and *solicite* my Cause with all his *Power* and *Interest*, my Sense of the innumerable *Provocations* I have given him to *turn* his *back* upon me, must either render me quite *desperate* of *Success* at the Throne of his Grace, or cause me to approach it with unspeakable *Horror* and *Confusion*. So that my *Intercourse* with God must either be wholly *interrupted* or rendred very *difficult* and *uneasy* to me; because my *slavish* dread of him must either *chase* me from his Altars, or *drag* me to them with *Violence* and *Reluctancy*. And hence it is, that under the Sense of our *Guilt*, we *naturally* fly to the *Intercessions* of *others*, whom we believe to have *more* Interest with God than ourselves; because we cannot *modestly* promise ourselves a free *Admittance* and *Access* to him upon our *own* Account; which probably was the Reason of the first Institution of *Demon-worship* among the *Heathens*, whose Minds being *stung* with the Sense of their own *Guilts*, they were not able to approach God without fearful *Despondence* and *Anxiety*; whereupon they began to *cast about* (as it is *natural* for *guilty* Minds to do)

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how they might procure ſome *other* Beings, that were in great Favour with God, to interpoſe with him in their behalf; and having learned by an univerſal Tradition, that there was a ſort of *middle* Beings, called *Angels* or *Demons*, between the Sovereign *God* and *Men*, they began to *addreſs* to theſe, and to *bribe* them with *Sacrifices* and *ſacred Honours* to intercede with God in their behalf. And hence, *Apuleius de Dæmon. Soc.* calls theſe Demons, *Mediæ poteſtates per quas & deſideria noſtra & merita ad Deos commeant; inter terricolas cœlicolaſque vectores hinc precum, inde donorum; qui ultro citroque portant hinc petitiones, inde ſuppetias, ſeu quidam utrumque interpretes & ſalutigeri, i. e.* "They "are middle Powers by whom our Deſires and Merits are preſented to the "Gods; they go between Heaven and Earth, and carry from hence the Prayers "of Men, and from thence the Gifts of God; from Earth they go with "Petitions, and from Heaven they return with Supplies, or they are the Inter-"preters of both Worlds, that do continually carry and report the mutual Salu-"tations of both to each other". By which it is evident, that they thought it very neceſſary, in order to God's *accepting* their *Addreſſes*, that they ſhould be *preſented* and *recommended* to him by ſome *better* Beings than *themſelves*; their *guilty* Minds, it ſeems, *ſuggeſting* to them, that it would be high Preſumption for ſuch *great* Offenders as themſelves, to approach the Divine Majeſty, without being *introduced* and *patronized* by ſome more *pure* and *holy* Beings. And I am very apt to think that the great cauſe of that *Spirit of Bondage*, which poſſeſſed the ancient *Jews*, and rendred them ſo *diffident* and *tremulous* in all their approaches to God, was their want of an *explicite* knowledge of the *Mediator*. For what *diſmal* and *melancholy* Expoſtulations do we frequently meet with in their addreſſes to God; ſuch as, *Wilt thou be angry for ever? Haſt thou forgotten to be gracious? Wilt thou remember thy loving kindneſs no more?* Which plainly ſhews, that their *guilt* ſuggeſted to them ſuch *frightful* Apprehenſions of God, as did very much *cramp* their *hope* and *confidence* in him. And hence the Apoſtle oppoſes this *Spirit of Bondage* in them, to that Chriſtian *Spirit of Adoption, by which we cry, Abba, Father, i. e.* by which we approach God with great *freedom* and *aſſurance*, and go to him as *Children* to a *kind* and *merciful* Father, *Rom.* viii. 15. Now if you would know from whence this Chriſtian *freedom* and *aſſurance* proceeds, the Author to the *Hebrews* will inform you, *Heb.* x. 21, 22. *Having therefore an High Prieſt over the Houſhold of God, i. e.* to mediate and intercede for us, *let us draw near with a true heart and full aſſurance of Faith*; and *Heb.* iv. 14, 15, 16. the Apoſtle urges our having a *compaſſionate High Prieſt in Heaven* to intercede for us, as an Argument to encourage us to *come boldly to the Throne of Grace.* And indeed, what *greater* encouragement can we have to *draw nigh* unto God with an *humble* confidence, than *this* conſideration, that the *higheſt* Favourite he hath in *Heaven* or *Earth*, is our *Advocate*? And that *he* is not only infinitely concerned for us, as being *akin* to us by *Nature*, and having a compaſſionate ſenſe of our *Infirmities*; and he doth not only imploy in *our* behalf all the *favour* and *intereſt* he has with God as he is the Son of his *Eſſence*, and the *Object* of his *Delight*, but that he ever intercedes for us in the *right* and *virtue* of that *meritorious Sacrifice*, with which he *bought* and *purchaſed* all thoſe Heavenly Bleſſings he intercedes for. So that now all we have to do is to return to God by an unfeigned *Repentance*, which if we do, he ſtands *engaged* to *undertake* our *Cauſe*; and what may we not expect from the *Patronage* of ſo *great* and *powerful* a Mediator? For how great ſoever our paſt Sins are, his Intereſt in Heaven is far *greater*; how *loud* and *clamorous* ſoever our paſt *Provocations* are, his *Blood* and *Wounds* are far *louder*; and how importunately ſoever our paſt *guilts* may *imprecate* the Divine Vengeance upon us, his *Interceſſion* does far more importunately and prevalently *deprecate* it. So that now we cannot reaſonably doubt of a free admiſſion to God in any caſe whatſoever wherein our Saviour will make uſe of, his Intereſt for us with God; and therefore ſince in all Caſes he does continually imploy his Intereſt for us, but *only* in that of

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our *impenitence*, every *penitent* Sinner in the World has a *door* of *access* set open to him by the *Intercession* of *Jesus*, through which he may *freely* enter, and with an *humble* confidence apply himself to God for *Mercy*, and for *Grace to help him in the Time of Need.* Thus by the Mediation of our Saviour, God has taken off that *Imbargo* which Mens guilts had laid upon their *commerce* with Heaven; and made way for a *free* and *generous* intercourse between *himself* and his *Creatures.*

V. And Lastly, This way of communicating his Favours to us through the Mediation of Christ, is most apt to *assure* our *diffident* Minds of God's gracious *Intentions* to perform to us all the *good Things* which he hath *promised* us upon *our* performing the *Conditions* of them. It is true, if God only *promised* them, we should have had abundant reason to believe him on his *own* bare *word*, without any farther *security*: But, alas! to be *diffident* and *distrustful* is the *inseparable* property of *guilty* Minds; and so great is our *guilt* and *ill desert*, and so *inestimable* are the *Blessings* and *Favours* which God promises us, that when we reflect upon *both*, and compare them *together*, it so *confounds* our *Reason*, and *astonishes* our *Faith*, that notwithstanding all the security God hath given us, we can *hardly* believe without *trembling* and *diffidence.* So that had not God given us some *other* Security besides that of his own *Word* and *Promise*, it would have extremely *puzzled* our *Faith* to believe that God sincerely *intended* such *mighty goods* for such *unworthy* Subjects. For whenever we reflected on our own *guilt* and *ill desert*, we must have looked upon God as our *adverse Party*, as one that was concerned only for his own *right* and *honour*, to retrieve from us that natural *homage* we *owed* him, and had hitherto unjustly *detained* from him; and we should have been but too apt to *suspect* that when once he had obtained this end of us, he would be much less concerned to make good *our* right to his promise, than he was to recover his *own* to our Duty. Now, although this had been a most *unreasonable* suspicion, after the *God of Truth* had passed his *word* to the *contrary*; yet there is nothing so unreasonable which *guilty* Minds are not apt to *suspect*; and therefore out of great *condescension* to this *pitiable* infirmity of his *sinful* Creatures, God thought meet, upon his entrance into a *New Covenant* with us, not only to *oblige* himself thereby to bestow on us the most *inestimable* Favours, if we performed *our* Part, but also to put the *making good* of his Obligation into a *third* hand; namely, into the hand of a *Mediator*, who, by the nature of his *Office*, is as much obliged to secure *our* Right as God's, as being *equally* concerned for *both* Parties; as well that *God* should make good to *us* what he hath *promised*, as that we should make good to *him* what he *requires*. So that now we have no longer to do with God *immediately* as our *adverse Party*, but all our *Intercourse* with him is by a *Mediator*, who, by his Office, is obliged to be on *our* side as well as *God's*, and to see that what he hath *promised* be performed *to* us, as well as that what he *requires* be performed *by* us. And hence our Saviour is called *the Mediator of the New Covenant*, and *the Mediator of a better Covenant*; which Expressions plainly bespeak him to be an *Authorized* Security on *both sides* for the *mutual* Performance to each other of what they stand respectively *obliged* to by this Covenant; and hence also he is called *the Sponsor or Surety of a better Covenant*, because he stands *engaged* for the Performance of *both* Parties, so far as it was *possible* for him to oblige them thereunto; for *us*, to oblige us by the strongest Motives to repent and persevere in *well-doing*; for God, to oblige him by the most powerful Pleas to *Pardon*, and *crown* us with *eternal Life*; and the *latter* of which he performs by his *Intercession*, wherein, by continual *pleading* that precious *Blood* which God hath long since *accepted* in consideration of our *Pardon* and *eternal Life*, he continually obtains *Power* and *Authority* from God to *bestow* on us the Blessings he intercedes for. So that now we have not only God's Word, but also the *Suretyship* of our Saviour to depend on; who not only stands engaged to us for God, that he shall *perform* all his *Promises* to us, but hath also

Right and Power upon the just *claim* of his *Sacrifice*, to *oblige* him to perform them. So that, as God, in condescension to the pitiable Diffidence of *guilty* Minds, hath been graciously pleased to *seal* his *Promises* with his Oath; so that he might leave us no *umbrage* of *distrust*, he hath superadded to both the collateral Security of a *Mediator* for the performance of them; of a Mediator that hath purchased of him all the Blessings he had *promised* us, and paid for them with his own *Blood*; and so is not only *obliged* to sue for them at the *Throne* of his *Grace*, but also *authorized* to claim at the *Tribunal* of his *Justice*; and in a word, of a Mediator in whose Hands he hath actually deposited all the Blessings he hath promised us, and made his *Executor in trust* for the performance of his *bequests* to the *Heirs of Promise*. So that now to distrust the performance of his Promise to us, is not only to *suspect* God's *Word* and his *Oath*, which are altogether as sacred and inviolable as his *God-head*, but also to *question* the *security*, and *arraign* the *fidelity* of a *Mediator* that died for us; that *purchased* for us with his own *Blood* all the Blessings which God hath promised us; by virtue whereof he not only *rightfully* claims them of God, but hath also *actually* received them in *our* behalf. So that now we can't be defeated of them, unless he will *withhold* them from us; and he cannot withhold them from us without *violating* his *trust*; since it is for *us*, and in *our* behalf that God hath deposited them in *his* Hands: and can we imagine that he, who, was so true and kind a Friend to *us*, as to lay down his Life to *purchase* them for *us*, will be now so *unkind* and *unfaithful* together, as to *detain* them from *us*, wheh God hath *intrusted* him with them in *our* behalf, and fully *impowered* and *authorized* him to bestow them on *us?* Having therefore the *security* not only of God's *Promise* and *Oath*, but also of our Saviour's *Kindness* and *Fidelity*, for the performance of *God's* Part of the New Covenant, if we perform *ours*, what infinite encouragement must it give us to forsake our Sins, and return to our Duty? For now, if we repent, we have no more reason to *question* God's *pardoning* and *forgiving* us; if we persevere to the end in *well-doing*, we have no more cause to *doubt* of his *crowning* us with *Eternal Happiness*, than we have to distrust our present *Being* and *Existence*. If therefore the most *ample* assurance that God *himself* can give *us* of *his* Mercy and *our* Happiness, hath any force in it to oblige us to *repent* and *amend*, *this* our Saviour's *Intercession* you see *fairly* proposes to *us*; so that if this proposal doth not effectually influence our *hope*, and thereby *excite* and *animate* our *endeavours*, it is impossible that any encouragement should ever *move* or *affect* us.

And thus you see, in all these several Particulars, how *effectually* this way of God's communicating his Favours to us, through the *Intercession* of our Saviour, tends to our *Reformation* and *Amendment*; what a *fruitful* Topick of *Motives* it is to induce us to *Repentance*, and how *pathetically* it *addresses* to every *affection* in us that is capable of *persuasion*; what awful and reverential *Thoughts* of Almighty God, it suggests to our Minds, to *dispose* our *stubborn* Wills to an humble submission to him? What a horrible Representation it makes of our *Sins*, and of God's *Wrath* and *Indignation* against them; and what a dreadful alarm it gives to our *fear*, to *rouse* and *awake* us out of our *sinful* security! And, in a word, how *powerfully* it *encourages* us to *draw near unto God*, and to make our addresses to him with an *humble* and *generous* Freedom; and what *vast* assurances it gives our hope of his *gracious* Intentions towards us, if we *repent* and *amend?* All which considered, one would think it were *impossible* for any Man that *believes* and *understands* this *wonderful* Method of Mercy, not to be *moved* and *affected* by it: And certainly that Man who hath *obstinacy* enough to *withstand* all its *Persuasions*, and *finally* to *defeat* and *baffle* those *powerful* Attempts which it makes to *reclaim* him, is a Creature not to be moved by *Reason* and *Argument*. For in this he has conquered the greatest Motives of all sorts that can be urged to persuade Men, and when once he is got beyond the *reach* of *persuasion*, and no Motive of *In-*

genuity, or *hope*, or fear can *affect* him, his Condition is *desperate*, and his obstinacy *incurable*. Wherefore, as we would not *finally* disappoint this *wonderful* Contrivance of *God* to *reclaim* us, and *thereby* render ourselves for ever *desperate*, let us at length be persuaded *seriously* to consider the *Motives* and *Arguments* it proposes to us; and never to cease *urging* and *pressing* them upon our own Souls, till they have *conquered* our *obstinate* Wills and *prejudiced* Affections, and finally *captivated* us into a *free* compliance with their *powerful* Persuasions. For if, through our wilful *Neglect* and *Inconsideration*, this *mighty* Project of Mercy prove utterly *unsuccessful* with us, it is certain we have sinned ourselves past all hope of *Recovery*, and it will be in *vain* to make any farther experiment on us. And when we have once *baffled* this last and most powerful Remedy of the Divine Goodness, what remains but that it should give us up, and utterly *abandon* us to the just desert and dire Effects of our own *Folly* and *Obstinacy*.

SECT. VII.

Of the Kingly *Office of our Saviour.*

WHEN I first entered upon this Argument of the *particular* Offices of our Mediator, I proposed to *handle* them in the same order that he *performed* and *executed* them; and accordingly, as he began with his *Prophetick* Office, of which his whole Life was a continued Ministry, so I have treated of this Office in the *first* Place: And as from his *Prophetick* he proceeded to his *Priestly* Office, one part of which he executed on the *Cross*, where he offered himself a *Sacrifice* for the Sins of the World, and the other upon his *Ascension* into Heaven, where he *presented*, and still *continues* to present his Sacrifice to the Father by way of *Intercession* for us; so I proceeded, in the next Place, to treat of his *Priesthood*, in both the Parts of it: And now in the *last place*, in pursuit of the same order, I proceed to his *Regal* or *Kingly* Office, which was the last he entred upon; after he had *finished* his *Prophecy*, *offered* his *Sacrifice*, and *presented* it to his Father in Heaven. For so in Scripture the *Regality* of Christ is always spoken of as successive both to his *Prophetick* and *Priestly* Office, and as the fruit and reward of his faithful discharge and execution of them. So *Phil.* ii. 8, 9, 10. it was *because he humbled himself, and became obedient to Death, even the Death of the Cross, that God highly exalted him, and gave him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth.* And *Rom.* xiv. 9. the Apostle tells us, that *it was for this end that Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living*; and accordingly the Angels in St. *John*'s Vision attribute his *advancement* to his *Regal* dignity to the *merit* of his *Death* and *Sacrifice*, Rev. v. 12. *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing.* And hence his *sitting at the right hand of God*, which is the great *Scripture-Metaphor* by which his *Regal* Authority is expressed (of the sense and meaning of which *vide Pearson*'s Exposition of the Creed, *p.* 277, 278, 279.) is mentioned as the Fruit and Consequence of his *Death* and *Intercession*. So *Heb.* i. 3. *When he had by himself purged our Sins*, *i. e.* by dying for us on Earth, and presenting his Sacrifice in Heaven, *he sat down on the right Hand of the Majesty on high*; and Heb x. 12. *But this Man after he had offered one Sacrifice for Sins, for ever sat down on the right Hand of God*; and so also 1 *Pet.* iii. 22. we are told, that it was upon *his going into Heaven*, *i. e.* to present his Sacrifice to his Father there, that he was advanced to the *right Hand of God*, and that *Angels and Authorities, and Powers were made subject to him.* For his *going into Heaven* was a *Priestly* Act, corresponding to the High-Priest's going into the *Holy of Holies*, to present his

his Sacrifice to God there; so that Christ's first arrival into Heaven, and presenting his Sacrifice there, is the beginning and commencement of his *Intercession*, in Answer to which he first received of his Father that Royal Power and Authority which he exercises both in *Heaven* and *Earth*; and it is by virtue of the continuance of that his *Priestly* Intercession, that this his *Royal* Power is continued and perpetuated to him. So that as he is a *Royal Priest*, *i. e* a Priest invested with *Regal* Power to bestow the Blessings he intercedes for, so he is a *Sacerdotal King*, *i. e.* a King that holds his *Regal* Power in the *right* and *virtue* of his *Priestly* Intercession. For it is by the *continuance* of his *Intercession* that he obtains the *continuance* of his *Royal* Authority to bestow those Blessings on us which he intercedes for. So that as Christ *intercedes* in the virtue of his *Sacrifice*, so he *rules* in the virtue of his *Intercession*. And accordingly you find in Scripture his *Ascension* into Heaven, there to intercede for us, represented as a *Triumphal* progress to his *Coronation*, wherein, after the manner of *Princes* in that glorious *Solemnity*, he scatters a Royal *Largess* among his Subjects, *Ephes.* iv. 8. It is true, before his Ascension, he tells his Disciples, that *all Power was given him in Heaven and Earth*, Matth. xxviii. 18. But this, it is evident, he spake by way of *Prolepsis* or *Anticipation*, a very usual Scheme of Speech in Scripture, which is to express Things of *certain* Futurity, as if they were *actually* Existing; according to which Scheme *all Power is given me*, imports no more than *all Power is shortly to be given me*, *i. e.* upon my *Ascension* into Heaven. For so it is evident our Saviour must be understood in that *parallel* Expression, *John* v. 22. *The Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son*; which words he spake long before his *Death*, when it is evident, that *all Judgment*, i. e. *Universal*, *Regal* Authority was not *actually committed to him*, but there was only a *certain* futurity of it. For so himself tells us, that his *sitting down with his Father on his Throne*, or investiture with that *Regal* Authority which he now exercises; was the *reward* and *consequence* of his *overcoming*, or consummate Victory on the Cross, *Rev.* iii. 21. By all which it is evident, that it was upon his *Ascension* into Heaven, and Oblation of his Sacrifice *there*, by way of *Intercession*, that Christ was installed in his *Universal*, *Mediatorial Kingdom*. It is true, our Saviour had a *peculiar* Kingdom in *this* World, *viz.* the *Jewish Church*, not only before his *Ascension*, but before his *Incarnation*, as I shall shew hereafter; but as for that Right of Dominion over the *Gentile World* too, by which he became *universal* Lord and King, he was not invested with it till his *Ascension* into Heaven. And therefore he himself tells us, that his *Mission* into this World was purely *to the lost sheep of the House of Israel*, Matth. xv. 24. and accordingly in the pursuance of this his Mission, when he sent forth his Ministers to Preach his Gospel, he orders them *not to go into the way of the Gentiles, nor to enter into the City of the Samaritans, but to go rather to the lost sheep of the House of Israel*, Matth. x. 5, 6. which implies, that at that Time he was not *actually* authorized to *subdue* and *reduce* the *Gentiles* under his Dominion, but that his Authority extended only to the *Jewish* Nation: But when he had told his Disciples, in that *proleptical* Speech after his *Resurrection*, that *all power was given him in Heaven and Earth*, it immediately follows, *Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father*, &c. as if he had said, *now* my Commission and Authority is *enlarged*, and I am made *Universal* Lord and King, go ye therefore in pursuance of it, and by your Ministry endeavour to reduce *all Nations* under my Dominion. And hence it was that the *Mystery* of the *calling* of the *Gentiles* into the *Kingdom* of Christ was not *revealed* till after his *Ascension*, vide *Acts* xi. 18. because it was *upon* his Ascension that he received his *Universal Kingly* Authority over them, and till *then* it was to no purpose to reveal it. So that it was over the *Gentile World peculiarly* that he received Power and Dominion upon his *Ascension* into Heaven; he was King of the *Jews* long before, but upon his Ascension he was invested with a right of Dominion over the *Gentiles* too,

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and thereupon became the *Universal* Lord and Monarch of the World under the most High God and Father of all Things. But this I shall have occasion farther to explain hereafter.

In the prosecution of this great Argument, I shall endeavour these six Things:

First, To give an account of the *Beginning* and *Progress* of this *Kingdom* of Christ.

Secondly, To explain the *Nature* and *Constitution* of it.

Thirdly, To shew who are the *Ministers* of it under Christ.

Fourthly, To assign and explain the *Regal* Acts which Christ *hath*, and *doth*, and *will* hereafter exercise in it.

Fifthly, To give an Account of the *End* and *Conclusion* of it.

Sixthly and *Lastly*, To shew the *Reason* and *Wisdom* of this Method of God's governing sinful Men by this his *Mediatorial* King, Christ *JESUS*.

SECT. VII.

Of the Rise *and* Progress *of Christ's* Kingdom.

AS for the *First*, *viz.* the *Beginning* and *Progress* of Christ's *Kingdom*, I shall endeavour to give an Account of it in these following Propositions:

First, That the Kingdom of Christ is founded upon the *New Covenant*.

Secondly, That the New Covenant *commenced* immediately after the *Fall*; and was afterwards particularly *renewed* to *Abraham* and his Posterity.

Thirdly, That, upon its first *Commencement*, Christ was the *Mediator* of it, and so he *continued* all along in that particular *renewal* that was made of it to the People of *Israel*.

Fourthly, Therefore that, as *Mediator* of *this* Covenant, Christ was *King* of *all* that were admitted into it, and *particularly* of *Abraham* and his Posterity, or the People of *Israel* with *whom* it was renewed.

Fifthly, That after his coming into the World he still retained his Title of *King of Israel* in *particular*, till they finally rejected *him*, and the *Covenant* in which his Kingdom is founded.

Sixthly, That though the *main body* of that Nation *rejected* him, yet there was a *Remnant* of it that *received* and *acknowledged* him as their *rightful* Lord and King.

Seventhly, That *this* Remnant still continued the same *individual* Kingdom of Christ with the former, though very much *reformed* and *improved*.

Eighthly, That to this individual Kingdom of Christ, thus reformed and improved, was *superadded* all those *Gentiles* that were afterwards converted to *Christianity*.

First, That the Kingdom of Christ is founded in the *New Covenant*. For it is by the New Covenant that *he* engages himself to us to be our *gracious* and *merciful* Lord, and that *we* engage ourselves to him to be his *faithful* and *obedient* Subjects; and from these *mutual* Engagements results the *relation* of *King* and *Subjects* between him and us. So that the *Church* and *Kingdom* of Christ consists of all those *People*, *Nations*, and *Kindreds*, who have been admitted into this *Covenant-relation* to him, wherein by a *solemn* Vow of *Fealty* and *Allegiance*, they have indispensably obliged themselves to *serve* and *obey* him. But of this I shall have occasion to Discourse more largely hereafter.

Secondly, Therefore this New Covenant *commenced* immediately after the *Fall*, and was afterwards in a particular manner *renewed* to *Abraham* and his Posterity. For the New Covenant was a Plank thrown forth to Mankind *immediately* after that woful Shipwreck that was made by the Fall. For no

sooner

ſooner had God denounced this *deſerved* Doom on our *lapſed* Parents, but, to ſupport them from *ſinking* into utter *deſperation*, he ſubjoins that gracious *Promiſe*, Gen. iii. 15. *The Seed of the Woman ſhall bruiſe the Serpent's head*; where by the *Seed of the Woman*, not only *Chriſtian*, but the ancient *Jewiſh* Interpreters underſtand the *Meſſias*, and by the Serpent, the *Devil*, who in the form of a Serpent had tempted our firſt Parents to that *fatal* Revolt which drew after it all thoſe *miſerable* Conſequents which their Poſterity have groaned under ever ſince: By the Meſſias his *bruiſing the Serpent's head*, is meant his *aſſaulting* and *cruſhing* under foot the very *ſeat* of all his *Strength* and *Power*, and finally *reſcuing* Mankind from under his *Dominion* and *Tyranny*. For this Promiſe was the firſt *dawning*, the *Morning Twilight* of the New Covenant; and, ſo far as we can find, the *only* diſcovery of it to the *Old* World; and therefore in all probability was the *ſole* ground and object of that *Faith* by which *Abel* and *Enoch* were *juſtified* in the Sight of God, *Heb.* xi. 4, 5. For, though that Promiſe was but a *dark* and *obſcure* intimation of the *Goſpel Covenant*, yet thus much it plainly propoſed to them, that from the Firſt Parents of the World there ſhould *deſcend* a certain Perſon, who ſhould conquer the *Devil* that had conquer'd *them*, and thereby repair the damage of *their* Apoſtaſy; by *believing* of which, it ſeems, and acting *accordingly*, they found *Grace* and *Favour* in the Sight of God: But however it is apparent that the *New* Covenant was in force in the Time of the *Old* World, becauſe it is evident both that the *Faith* of the *Antediluvian* Patriarchs was *actually* accepted by God, and that their Faith could upon no *other* account have *been* accepted by him, but only in the virtue of *this* New Covenant.

But after the Flood, God more *clearly* and *expreſly* renewed this *gracious* Covenant with *Abraham* and his Children, *Gen.* xii. 2, 3. where he promiſes *to bleſs him, to make his Name great, and himſelf a Bleſſing, and to bleſs them that bleſſed him, and curſe them that curſed him*, and *in him*, that is, in the *Meſſias*, who ſhould deſcend *from* him, *vide* Gal. iii. 16. *to make all the Families of the Earth bleſſed*; which Covenant he *again* renews to him, *Chap.* xiii. and *Chap.* xv. and then in *Chap.* xvii. he *yet* again renews it more *largely* and *ſolemnly*, aſſuring him not only that *he ſhould be a Father of many Nations*, &c. but that *that* Covenant ſhould extend to his *Poſterity* as well as to *him*, and that *he would be a God to him, and to his Seed after him*; immediately after which he inſtitutes the *Ceremony* of *Circumciſion* for a perpetual *Seal* and *Ratification* of his Covenant between him and them; and upon this Covenant it was, that the *Jewiſh* Church was founded. For ſo *Circumciſion*, which was the ſtanding *Seal* of *this* Covenant, was alſo the ſtanding *Rite* of Admiſſion into *that* Church; which is a plain Argument, that to be a *Member* of that *Church*, and a *Confederate* in this *Covenant* was one and the ſame *thing*, becauſe they were admitted both by one and the ſame *Rite*. Now from the New Teſtament it is evident, that this Covenant with *Abraham*, upon which the *Jewiſh* Church was built, was the *Goſpel* or *New Covenant*. For ſo *Gal.* iii. 8. the Apoſtle calls the Delivery of this Covenant, *preaching the Goſpel to Abraham*; which muſt be apparently falſe, if *this* and the *Goſpel-Covenant* were not the *ſame*; and in *verſe* 29. he tells them, *if ye be Chriſt's, i. e.* true Chriſtians, *then are ye Abraham's Seed, i. e.* that Spiritual Seed to whom the Covenant with *Abraham* extends, *and Heirs according to the Promiſe. i. e.* of that Covenant; but how could they be *Abraham's Seed*, by being Chriſtians, and *Heirs to the Promiſe of Abraham*'s Covenant, if the *Seed* with whom *Abraham*'s Covenant was made, were of a different *Religion* from Chriſtians, and the Covenant itſelf were of a different *kind* from the Chriſtian Covenant? But that it was the very *ſame*, appears yet farther, becauſe in the firſt Place, it requires the ſame *Condition*, *viz.* an *obediential* or *practical* Faith. For ſo *Gen.* xv. 6. it is ſaid, that *Abraham believed in the Lord, and he accounted it to him for righteouſneſs, i. e.* though he had *formerly* been *guilty* of many *Sins*; and at *preſent* could not *challenge* any *reward* from God; yet upon that *obedient* Faith which he exerciſed, God

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acquitted and *justified* him; or, which is the same thing, *dealt with* him as if he had been *perfectly* righteous: And accordingly his *Circumcision*, which was the *Ratification* of that Covenant, is in *Rom.* iv. 11. called *the Seal of the Righteousness of Faith*, *i. e.* of his *Justification*, or being *accounted* righteous, and *dealt with* accordingly by God, upon his *Faith* or *practical Assent* to God's Promise. And accordingly the Apostle, *Gal.* iii. 9. thus concludes, *so then they which be of Faith*, *i. e.* sincere Believers, as *Abraham* was, *are blessed with faithful Abraham*; in which Words he expresly asserts that *Abraham* and *Christians* are blessed upon the *same* Terms, *viz.* upon an *obediential* and *practical* Faith.

And, as *Abraham*'s required the same *Condition* with the *New* Covenant, so it also contained the same *Promises*. For, although those Promises according to the *outside* and *litteral* sense of them, do contain only *temporal* Blessings, yet it is apparent, that they had all the *eternal* Blessings of that New Covenant *lock'd* and *treasured* up in the *mystical* sense of them. For thus St. *Paul* expresly tells us, that the *Justification* of the *New* Covenant was *couched* in that *Promise* that was made to *Abraham*, Gal. iii. 8. *The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen through Faith, preached the Gospel before unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all Nations be blessed*; which necessarily implies, that in that *Blessing* was *included* their *Justification* in the sight of God. And as for Divine *Grace* and *Assistance* to *enable* Men to *repent* and *persevere* in well-doing, the Prophet *Micah* tells us, that one part of God's *performing his truth unto Jacob, and his mercy to Abraham*, consisted in *his subduing our Iniquities, and casting our Sins into the depths of the Sea*, Micah vii. 19, 20. And lastly, as for *eternal Life*, the Apostle plainly tells us, that God gave the Inheritance, *i. e.* of Justification to eternal Life, *to Abraham by promise*, Gal. iii. 18. upon which Gift we are assured, *that Abraham looked for a City which hath Foundations, whose builder and maker is God.* Heb. xi. 10. Since therefore both the *Conditions* required, and the *Blessings* promised, in *Abraham*'s and the *New* Covenant, were in all Particulars the *same*, it necessarily follows, that they were one and the same *Covenant*. It is true, indeed, as to the *manner* of the Revelation of it, there was a vast difference; for whereas in the *Gospel* it is revealed throughout with the greatest *clearness* and *perspicuity*, and in *plain* and *literal* Terms, it was delivered *veiled* to *Abraham* and his Posterity under *general* and *obscure* Expressions, which at best exhibited to them but a *dark* and *confused* apprehension of it. But however it is still the *same* Covenant, notwithstanding it be thus *differently* expressed; even as it is the same Sun that sometimes is *overcast* with *Clouds*, and other times *shines* forth with a full *Splendor*.

Thirdly, from the very first *Commencement* of this Covenant, Christ was *Mediator* of it, and so hath *continued* all along under that particular *Renewal* of it, which God made to the People of *Israel*. For the Scripture expresly affirms, that he is the *Mediator* and *Surety* of this *New* and *better Covenant*, that is, that it is he who as our *Advocate* with God, *obtains* for us the Blessings of this Covenant; and who, as our *King*, under God, *dispenses* them to us: And if he be thus the Mediator of this Covenant *now*, he must have *always* been so, even from the *Fall*, upon which it commenced, to his *Ascension* into Heaven; otherwise the New Covenant, upon which he now mediates, must have been Four thousand Years *without* a Mediator; which, considering the whole *State* and *Condition* of it, can by no means be allowed: For besides that, the *Fall* of Man was the *Reason* why God withdrew himself from all *immediate* Converse with him, and that therefore it is reasonably to be presumed, that whatsoever Converse he had with him *afterwards*, it was through a *Mediator*; there is nothing more evident from Scripture, than that *this* very Covenant, which is the standing *Medium* of God's *Converse* and *Intercourse* with Men, was granted to us by God, in *Consideration* of Christ's *Death* and *Sacrifice*. Since therefore it was granted long *before* Christ *died*, even from the *Fall* of *Adam*, it must be granted upon Christ's *obliging* and *engaging* himself to the Father to die for us *in the Fulness of Time*; which Engagement of his

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was *virtually* and in *effect* an *offering* up himself a *Sacrifice* for us; God being as much *secured* of it upon *his* Engagement, as if he had *actually* performed it. Upon which Account he is called, *the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World*, *Rev.* xiii. 8. because upon his *obliging* himself to die for us, which was *immediately* after the Fall, the *Event* became as *certain* and *infallible*, as if in that very *moment* he had breathed out his Soul upon the Cross. And accordingly God *proceeded* on it as on a *sure* and *certain* Fund, and in *Consideration* of it, *granted* the New Covenant to the World. Hence the Apostle tells us, that it was *by Means of his Death* that there was *Redemption for the Transgressions that were under the first Covenant*, *Heb.* ix. 15. Since therefore it was, in Consideration of Christ's *future* Sacrifice, that God *first* granted this Covenant to Men, it necessarily follows, that upon the *same* Consideration, he at the same time *appointed* Christ to be the *Mediator* of it; because, as I shewed before, he is Mediator in the *right* and *virtue* of his *Sacrifice*, by which he obtained it; and therefore, since his Sacrifice had the same Virtue in it when it was *future*, as it has now when it is *past*, he had the same right to be Mediator of it *then*, as he hath *now*. In short, Christ's Sacrifice was as *certain* in God's Account, and therefore as *prevalent* with him, *before*, as *after* it was offer'd; and therefore since his *Mediatorship* of the New Covenant is wholly owing to the Prevalence of his Sacrifice, there was the same Reason why God should admit him to be Mediator of it, before it was offered, as after; and accordingly long before he offered up his Sacrifice, he is called the *Angel* or Minister *of the Covenant*, *Mal.* iii. 1. And St. *Paul* expresly tells us, that Four hundred and thirty Years before the Law of *Moses* this Covenant was *confirmed of God* to *Abraham in Christ*, Gal. iii. 17. and if it was then *confirmed in Christ*, it is certain that then Christ was the Mediator of it.

Fourthly, *Christ's* being always Mediator of this Covenant, necessarily implies his having been always *King*, under God, of *all* that ever were admitted into it, and *particularly* of the People of *Israel*; because his *Kingly* Office is so *necessary* and *essential* a Part of his *Mediatorship*, that he cannot be properly a Mediator *without* it: For to mediate, as he doth, between God and Men, is to act *Authoritatively* for and in behalf of *both* Parties; so that if he act only for *one*, he cannot be truly said to be a Mediator between *both*; but in his acting *Authoritatively* for *God* consists his *Royalty* or *Kingly* Office, as you may see, *p.* 5, 22. and if his *Mediatorial* Office necessarily includes a *Kingly* Power, to be sure that Power must extend to *all* that ever were admitted into the Covenant upon which he mediates: For how can any Man be admitted into that *Covenant*, of which he is the *authorized* Mediator, without being subject to all the *Authority* which his Mediatorship necessarily implies?

Hence therefore it follows, that Christ hath been *always* King of the *Church of God*, or *confederate Society* of the true Worshippers of him, in *all* Ages of the World: For thus in the *Old* World St. *Peter* tells us, 1 *Pet.* iii. 19. that by that very Spirit whereby Christ rose from the Dead, *he went and preached to the Spirits in Prison*, *i. e.* by *Noah*, who, by the immediate Inspiration of the Holy Spirit, was a *Preacher* or Herald *of Righteousness*, Christ preached to the *Spirits* or *Souls* of Men, whilst they were yet *shut up* in, and *united* to their *Bodies* long before that general *Separation* of their Souls from their Bodies, which was made by the Flood; *vid.* Dr. *Ham. in Loc.* At *this* time, I say, whilst they were yet *alive*, Christ *preached* to them, to warn them of that general Destruction which was *pursuing* them, and would e'er long *overtake* them, unless they speedily *repented*; which shews that, *long* before the Flood, Christ acted as a *King*, in issuing out his Heralds, in his *Royal* Proclamations to Men, to *declare* his *Will* and *Pleasure* to them, and *warn* them of the fatal Consequence of their *Disobedience* to it.

Soon after the Flood Mankind almost *universally* apostatized from God to *Idolatry*; so that the *Church* or *Society* of the true Worshippers of him was quickly reduced into a very *narrow* Compass; so that Four hundred Years af-

ter, it seems very probable, that *Melchisedeck* was the *only* King in the World, who was not an *Idolater*. And now God seeing his Church almost *totally* extinguished by this *general* Defection of Mankind from his Covenant; to *recover* and *repair* it, he calls *Abraham* out of his *Idolatry* and *Idolatrous* Country, and with him and his Posterity *renews* the New Covenant, which the rest of Mankind had *renounced* and *deserted*; and to *secure* them from *ever* revolting from it, he *seals* and *ratifies* it with them by a sign in their Flesh, *viz.* that of *Circumcision*, which he gave them as a Mark to *distinguish* and preserve them *distinct* from the Idolatrous Nations round about them. And when afterwards the Posterity of *Abraham* was multiplied in *Egypt* into a numerous Nation, and this *Rite* of *Circumcision* being by *Ishmael* and *Esau* derived to *their* Posterity, and so made common to *other* Nations with *Israel*; God, to renew this Distinction, gives them the *Ceremonial Law* upon their coming out of *Egypt*; one great Design of which, even as that of *Circumcision*, was to *diversify* them from their *neighbouring* Idolaters, by *contrary* Rites and Observances: And hence the *Mosaick* Law is called by the Apostle, *a middle Wall of Partition*, Eph. ii. 14. alluding to that middle Wall in the Temple, which *divided* the Court of the *Jews* from the Court of the *Gentiles*, or Gentile *Proselytes of the Gate*, who, because they were not *circumcised*, were counted *unclean*, and upon that Account divided from the Circumcised by a Wall of Stone of three Cubits high; and a little after, *ver.* 15. he calls this Law *the Enmity* between the *Jews* and the *Gentiles*, because one great Design of it was to *divide* and *separate* the *Jews* from the *Gentiles*, and thereby securing them from *revolting* from the New Covenant, by *mingling* and *confounding* themselves with Idolaters. By which means the New Covenant became in a manner *appropriate* to *Israel*, none being allowed *Admission* into it, but only such as freely submitted themselves to the *distinguishing* Laws of that Communion, by which they were *separated* from all other Nations. Hence the Apostle tells us, that *to them pertained the Covenants*, Rom. ix. 4. *i. e.* the *New* Covenant itself, together with Circumcision, the Seal of it, which is also called a *Covenant*. And the same Apostle puts together, being *Aliens to the Commonwealth of* Israel, and *Strangers to the Covenants of Promise*, as inseparable Concomitants, *Eph.* ii. 12. And hence it is that they are styled God's *peculiar People*, Deut. iv. 2. and his *peculiar Treasure*, Psal. cxxxv. 4. because by this Covenant which passed between *God* and *them*, they were *separated* to God from all *other* Nations; and upon the same Account also they are called the *Lord's Portion, and the Lot of his Inheritance*, Deut. xxxii. 9. The New Covenant therefore being thus *particularly* confined to the People of *Israel*, whilst it continued so, Christ, who was *always* the *Mediator* of it, must be *particularly* the *Mediatorial* Head and King, that under the most High God and Father *ruled* and *governed* that Church and People. But because upon the Truth of *this* Assertion this *whole* Argument depends, I shall endeavour, as briefly as I can, to *evince* and *prove* it in these following Propositions:

First, That there was a certain *extraordinary* Angel, who frequently *appeared* and *spake* to the *Jewish* Patriarchs, who is sometimes called *Jehovah*, and sometimes the *Angel of Jehovah*, who ordinarily assumed to himself *divine* Appellations, and to whom those holy Men ordinarily render'd *Divine Honours*, and *Vows*, and *Sacrifices*.

Secondly, This extraordinary Angel was a *Divine* Person, and no *created* Being.

Thirdly, That he was that Divine Person that *descended* upon Mount *Sinai*, and from thence removed into the *Tabernacle*, and thence into the *Temple*.

Fourthly, That this Divine Person was not *God the Father*.

Fifthly, That he was *God the Son*.

First, That there was a certain *extraordinary* Angel, who frequently *appeared*, and *spake* to the *Jewish* Patriarchs, who is sometimes called *Jehovah*, and sometimes the *Angel* of *Jehovah*, &c. of which I might give innumerable Instances, but for brevity sake, shall only mention Two; the first is that of

Gen.

Gen. xviii. where we read of three *Men*, that is, as all agree, three *Angels* in *Human* Shapes, one of which in *verſe* 13. is expreſsly called *Jehovah*; after which, upon their going towards *Sodom*, the ſame *Jehovah* ſpeaks to *Abraham* again, *ver.* 17. *And Jehovah ſaid, Shall I hide from* Abraham *that which I am doing?* and ſo again, *ver.* 20. then in *ver.* 22. it is ſaid, that *the Men turned their Faces from thence, and went up to* Sodom, *but* Abraham *ſtood yet before Jehovah*, *i. e. Two* of the Angels went their way to *Sodom*; for ſo *chap.* xix. *ver.* 1. we read *but* of Two of them that arrived there; ſo that the *Jehovah*, before whom *Abraham* ſtood, muſt be the *Third*, who ſtaid behind conferring with *Abraham*; in which Conference *Abraham* ſeveral times addreſſes to him under the Name of *Jehovah*, and *verſe* 25. calls him *the Judge of all the Earth*; and then *verſe* 33. it is ſaid, that *Jehovah went away when he had made an end of ſpeaking unto* Abraham. The other Inſtance is in *Gen.* xxviii. from *ver.* 12. where you have recorded the Viſion of *Jacob*'s Ladder, *above which*, ver. 13. it is ſaid, *Jehovah ſtood and ſaid, I am the Lord God of* Abraham *thy Father*, &c. upon which *Jacob*, when he awaked, cries out, *Surely Jehovah is in this Place*, ver. 16. thereupon he *Sacrifices* to him, *ver.* 18. calls the Place *Bethel*, or the *Houſe of God*, ver. 19. and offers a *Vow* to him, *ver.* 20. wherein he obliges himſelf to acknowledge him for his *God*, ver. 21. but *chap* xxxi. *ver.* 11, 13. this *Divine* Perſon is called both the *Angel of God*, and *the God of* Bethel; and *Jacob* himſelf, in *Gen.* xlviii. 15, 16. calls him *the God, before whom his Father* Abraham *and* Iſaac *did walk, the God which fed him all his Life long, and the Angel which redeemed him from all evil.* And with this *God*, in the *Form* of a *Man*, we find *Jacob* wreſtling a whole Night together, ſuppoſing him, as it ſeems, to be an ordinary Angel, *chap.* xxxii. *ver.* 24 but underſtanding afterwards, who he was, he *calls the Name of the Place* Peniel, *becauſe he had ſeen God Face to Face*, ver. 30. which God, in *Hoſ.* xii. 4, 5. is called both the *Angel*, and *the Lord of Hoſts.* And this *Divine* Angel, or *Angel of God*, if you purſue the ſacred Hiſtory, you will find is the very *ſame* that afterwards appeared to *Moſes* in the *burning Buſh*, and under him conducted *Iſrael* through the *Red Sea* and *Wilderneſs* in the Appearance of a *Pillar of Fire and Cloud.* For ſo he is all along called promiſcuouſly *Jehovah* and the *Angel of Jehovah*, vid. *Exod.* iii. 2, 4. *Exod.* xiii. 21. compared with *chap.* xiv. 19.

Secondly, That he was a *Divine* Perſon, and no *Created* Angel, is evident not only from his *aſſuming* to himſelf the incommunicable *Name*, but alſo the incommunicable *Attributes* of *Jehovah*: For ſo he tells *Jacob*, not only that he was *Jehovah*, *the God of* Abraham *his Father, and the God of* Iſaac, *Gen.* xxviii. 13. not only that he was *the God of* Bethel, *where he anointed a Pillar, and vowed a Vow to him*, Gen. xxxi. 13. but alſo that he was *God Almighty*, Gen. xxxv. 11. whereas the Pſalmiſt tells us, that *Jehovah is God's Name alone*, Pſal. lxxxiii. 18. and *Almightineſs*, as all agree, is an *incommunicable* Perfection of God; ſo that had this Angel been a *created* Being, it would have been the higheſt degree of *Sacrilege* and *Profaneneſs* in him to *arrogate* to himſelf that incommunicable *Name* and *Attribute.* I know it is uſually objected, that he aſſumed God's Name and Attributes, not as due to his *Perſon*, but to his *Character*, as he was the *Embaſſadour* of God, and ſo *repreſented* his Majeſty: But where, I beſeech you, was it ever heard that an Embaſſadour was allowed to aſſume the *Name* and *Titles* of his *King*? Would it not be deemed high *Arrogance*, at leaſt, if not *High Treaſon*, for an *Engliſh* Embaſſadour, in the Delivery of his Embaſſy, thus to declare himſelf, *I am that high and mighty Prince* James *the Second, King of* England, *&c.* And can it be thought, that *God*, who, under the *Jewiſh* Oeconomy, was ſo peculiarly *jealous of his Honour*, and had ſuch *peculiar* Reaſon for it, conſidering the infinite *Proneneſs* of that People to *Idolatry*, would not only *permit*, but *authorize* a *Creature* to aſſume *his* Name and Attributes, and not only *avouch* itſelf to be *God*, but alſo arrogate his *incommunicable* Perfections and Prerogatives? The *Prophets*, we know, were God's Embaſſadours as well as the *Angels*: But yet they never preſu-

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med to call themselves *God* or *Jehovah*, or to arrogate *Omnipotence* to themselves, which yet they had as much right to do as *this* Angel, supposing him to be a *created* Being; but, on the contrary, whereas this Angel always spake in his *own* Name, and delivered what he said as his *own* Word, the Prophets always spake in a *different* Style, and still ushered in what they delivered with a *Thus saith the Lord*; and the same to be sure this blessed Angel would have done, had he been *only* an Embassadour from God. But besides that he assumed God's *Name*, and *Attributes*; he not only *admitted*, but *required* Divine Honours to be rendred to him: For so, as hath been shewed before, he not only *admitted Jacob* to offer *Sacrifice*, and a religious *Vow* to him, and therein to *devote* himself to him as to his *God*, but also *required* him to *make* and *dedicate* an Altar to him at *Bethel*, Gen. xxxv. 1. so also he admitted *Joshua* to *fall on his Face to the Earth and worship him*, and not only so, but bids him *loose his Shoe from off his Foot*, telling him, that the *Place whereon he stood*, *was holy*, as being consecrated by his Divine Presence, *Josh*. v. 14, 15. and the same *Command*, inforced with the same *Reason*, he gave before to *Moses* out of the *burning Bush*, Exod. iii. 5. and, to name no more, he received a *Burnt-offering*, and a *Meat-offering*, at the Hands of *Manoah* and his Wife, *Judg*. xiii. 23. And is it likely, that any created *good* Angel would ever have *admitted* these Things? Especially considering how strictly St. *John* was *forbid* by the Angel, at whose Feet he fell down, to worship him, *See thou do it not*, *I am thy Fellow-Servant* —— *worship God*, Rev. xix. 10. and so again, *Rev*. xxii. 9.

Thirdly, That he was also that Divine Person that *descended* upon Mount *Sinai*, and from thence removed into the *Tabernacle*, and thence into the *Temple*, is evident from what is recorded of him, *Numb*. xxii. 22, &c. where we have the History of the *Angel of the Lord's* meeting *Balaam* on the way, as he was going to curse the People of *Israel*; now that by *that* Angel there is meant this *Divine* Angel, or Angel *Jehovah*, appears, first, from *ver*. 32. where he tells *Balaam*, *Behold*, *I went out to withstand thee*, *because thy way is perverse before me*, *i. e.* it is contrary to that Will of mine which I declared to thee, *ver*, 12. where it is said, That *God said unto* Balaam, *thou shalt not go with them*, *thou shalt not curse the People*, *for they are blessed*; which is a plain Evidence, that this *God* and that *Angel of Jehovah* were the *same Person*. And then, secondly, *ver*. 35. it is said, that this *Angel of Jehovah said unto* Balaam, *go with the Men*, *but only the Word that I shall speak unto thee*, *that thou shalt speak*; whereas he that afterward *spake* unto him, and *instructed* him what he should say to *Balak*, is expresly called *God* and *Jehovah*; for so, *Numb*. xxiii. 4, 5. it is said, that *God met Balaam*, and that *Jehovah put a word into his Mouth*: Whence it appears, that this *God* and *Jehovah* was the same Person with that *Angel of the Lord* that gave him that Charge, *but only the word that I shall speak unto thee*, *that shalt thou speak*. But then, *thirdly* and lastly, *Balaam* himself calls the apparition of this Angel, *the Vision of the Almighty*, Numb. xxiv. 4, 16. which shews that this Angel was the *Almighty* himself.

Now this Angel *Jehovah*, *Balaam* in his inspired Parable calls *Jehovah the God and King of Israel*, and *the God that brought them out of Egypt*, Numb. xxiii. 21, 22. which is the very Style of that God that descended upon Mount *Sinai*, *I am Jehovah thy God that brought thee out of the Land of Egypt*, Exod. xx. 2. which is a plain Argument that it was all but one and the same Person.

But then *Judg*. ii. we have the History of another Appearance of this great *Angel of Jehovah*, who, as we are told in *ver*. 1. *came from Gilgal unto Bochim*, and by what he there saith of *himself*, it is evident that he was that very *God* that came down upon Mount *Sinai*, and afterwards dwelt in the *Tabernacle*; for there he declares, that it was he that *made them go up out of Egypt*, *and brought them to the Land which he sware unto their Fathers*, which is the Language of that God that dwelt in the Tabernacle, *vide* Exod. xxxiii. 1. that it was he that said, *I will never break Covenant with you*, *and ye shall make no League with the Inhabitants of this Land*, *and that they should throw*

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down their Altars: But, saith he, *ye have not obeyed my voice*; *why have ye done this? Wherefore I said, I will not drive them out from before ye, but they shall be Thorns in your Sides, and their God shall be a snare to you*, ver. 1, 2, 3. which are the very words of God, from the Tabernacle, as you may see *Exod.* xxxiv. 12, 13. *Numb.* xxxiii. 55. which is a plain Argument, that *this* Angel and *that* God that dwelt in the Tabernacle were one and the same Person.

And then that he was the God that afterwards fix'd his abode in the *Temple*, is very apparent. For, besides that no body questions but that it was the *same* Divine Person that brought *Israel* out of *Egypt*, led them through the *Wilderness*, came down upon Mount *Sinai*, resided in the *Tabernacle*, and that afterwards removed into the *Temple*, we have a *particular* evidence, that *this* Person was the *Angel Jehovah*, in *Isaiah* vi. 1. where the Prophet tells us, that he *saw Jehovah sitting on a Throne, high and lifted up, and his Train filled the Temple*; by which it is evident that he appeared to him in a *visible* form, else how could the Prophet have *seen* him? and that *sitting*, which is a *corporeal* Posture? But this the second *verse* puts out of all doubt, which attributes to him a *Face* and *Feet*, implying that *his* appearance was in a *Human* Form, the very same in which this *Angel Jehovah* was wont to make his *appearances* to Men; and then that Prophet concludes, that *he should certainly die, because his Eyes had seen the King, the Lord of Hosts*; which is the same *terrible* apprehension that Men always expressed upon the *appearance* of this *Angel Jehovah*. Thus upon the sight of him *Manoah* cries out, *We shall surely die, because we have seen God*, Judg. xiii. 22. and so also *Gideon*, Judg. vi. 22. and the Children of *Israel*, Exod. xx. 19. and *Moses* himself, *Exod.* iii. 6. So that among the Antients it seems it was a *received* opinion, that the *appearance* of this *illustrious* One, did commonly *bode* Death unto those that *beheld* him. Since therefore the Prophet had the same *dreadful* apprehension upon his *Vision* of *God* in the *Temple*, that all Men had before him upon the *appearance* of this *Angel Jehovah* to them, it is at least very probable that *that* God and *this* Angel were the same Divine Person.

Fourthly, That this divine Person was not the most High *God the Father*: For besides that our Saviour tells the *Jews, that they had not heard the Father's voice at any Time, nor seen his shape or appearance*, John v. 37. which is a plain evidence that that *Divine* Person who *spake* and *appeared* to their Fathers in a *Human* Voice or Shape, was not *God the Father*, of whom the same Apostle tells us, that *no Man hath seen God at any Time*, John i. 18. whereas it is expressly said of *Moses* and *Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the Seventy Elders of Israel, that they saw the God of Israel, viz.* upon Mount *Sinai*, and, as it is evident from the Text, it was in a *Human* Shape that they saw him; for *there was under his Feet as it were a paved work of Saphir Stone*, Exod. xxiv. 9, 10. and if he appeared to them with *Feet*, it is reasonable to suppose that he appeared with all the *other* Parts of a Human Body; for though *Moses* tells the People, that *they saw no Similitude* on the Mount, *but only heard a Voice*, Deut. iv. 12. yet this doth not at all hinder, but that *Moses* and the *Seventy Elders* with him *might* and *did*; for so when *Moses* desired to see the *Glory of God* upon the Mount, God tells him, *thou art not able to see my Face, i. e.* by reason of the *Glory* and *Lustre* of it, *for no Man shall see my Face and live*, i. e. no Man can endure without great *hazard* of his *Life*, the *brightness* and *splendor* of my Countenance; and from this Passage, in all probability, sprang that common Opinion in Mens Minds, that *they should surely die*, whenever they saw *God* or the *Angel Jehovah*; and then God proceeds, and tells *Moses*, that he would place him *in the Clift of the Rock, and cover him with his hand whilst he passed by*, and that when he was passed by *he would take away his hand*, and permit him to *see his back Parts*, Exod. xxxiii. 20, 21, 22, 23. by all which it seems evident that this *apparition* of God upon the Mount, which *Moses* and the *Elders* saw, was in a *Humane* Form, since it had not only *Feet*, but *Face*, and *Hands*, and *back Parts*, which is not only a farther Evidence that this *God* was

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the same Divine Person with that *Angel Jehovah*, who appeared so often in *Human* Shape, but also a plain Argument that he was not *God the Father*, who, as St. *John* tells us, was never *seen in any shape or appearance whatsoever:* Besides all which, I say, how can the *Father*, who is the *first* and *supreme* Person in the Holy Trinity, from whom both the *Son* and *Holy Spirit* are *sent*, be in *any* Sense stiled (as this *Divine* Person of whom we are treating is) *the Angel Jehovah?* For the word *Angel*, which imports a *Messenger*, implies some kind of *Inferiority* to him, whose Angel or Messenger he *is*, and therefore can in no Sense be *truly* and *properly* applied to the *most High God* and Father.

Fifthly and *lastly*, That this Divine Person was *God the Son:* For, *First*, that it was *he* who appeared to the *Patriarchs*, and particularly to *Abraham*, those Words of our Saviour plainly imply, in *John* viii. 56. *Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my Day, and he saw it and was glad:* Where by *Abraham's seeing of Christ's Day*, must necessarily be meant his *real*, and *actual*, and *personal* sight of Christ himself; for so the *Jews* understood it, *Thou art not yet* (say they in the following verse) *Fifty Years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?* As much as if they should have said, How is it possible that ever thou shouldst *personally* and *actually* see *Abraham*, or he thee, as thy Words do import, when thou art not yet fifty Years old, and there are many Ages since *Abraham* died. If therefore the *Jews* did not *mistake* Christ's Sense, it is plain that by *seeing his Day*, he meant *personally* and *actually* seeing *himself:* But that they did *not* mistake him, is evident, because if they *had*, Christ ought to have *corrected* them by *explaining* himself into some *other* sense, and not suffer them to *run away* with such a *gross* Mistake in a matter of such *mighty* Moment; instead of which, he plainly *allows* and *countenances* their sense in the Answer which he gave them, *verse* 58. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was I am*; as much as if he had said, it is no such *impossible* matter as you imagine, that *Abraham* should see *me*, and I *him*, because I have a *fix'd* and *eternal* existence, and therefore was in Being before ever *he* was born. So that either the *Jews* apprehended Christ *aright*, and if so, *Abraham really* and *actually* saw him, or Christ in his Answer *prevaricated* with them, and merely *plaid* upon their Mistake; and if *Abraham personally* saw Christ, it is certain that Christ must be that Divine Person that *appeared* to him. But then,

Secondly, That it was *he* also that brought *Israel* out of *Egypt*, and descended upon Mount *Sinai*, at the giving the Law to them, *i. e.* who declared himself to be *the Lord their God that brought them out of the Land of Egypt*, is apparent from *Heb.* xii. 26. where it is expresly affirmed, that it was Christ's *Voice which then did shake the Earth, i. e.* when the Law was delivered in Thunder from Mount *Sinai*; which is a plain Argument, that Christ was that *Jehovah*, who came down from Mount *Sinai*, and whose Voice caused *the whole Mount to quake greatly*, Exod. xix. 18. the same also is evident from *Eph.* iv. 8. *Wherefore he saith, i. e.* the Psalmist, *Psalm* lxviii. 18. *when he, i. e.* Christ (of whom he had been speaking just before, *ver.* 7.) *ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave Gifts unto Men:* So that either Christ must be the *Person* of whom the Psalmist *speaks*, or the Apostle must grosly *mis-quote*, and *misapply* him; and if he be the *same* Person, then from that *Psalm* it is evident; *First*, That it was *he* that *went before the People*, and *marched with them through the Wilderness*, verse 7. to 15. *Secondly*, That it was *he* that was *among the thousands of Angels in Sinai in the Holy Place*, and by their *Ministry* promulgated the Law from thence; *ver.* 17. *Thirdly*, That it was *he* who was *the God and King, whose goings were seen in the Sanctuary*, ver. 24. *Fourthly*, That it was *he* who was the God of the *Temple at Jerusalem*, ver. 29. For all these Things are expresly spoken of *him* that *ascended on high, and led captivity captive, and received Gifts for Men*, ver. 18. which the Apostle tells us was *Christ*.

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Thirdly, That it was he also that conducted them through the *Wilderness* into *Canaan*, appears from that of St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* x. 9. *Neither let us tempt Christ as some of them*, *i. e.* of the People of *Israel* in the Wilderness, *also tempted*, or as some Copies read it, *as some of them also tempted him, and were destroyed by Serpents:* and although in most Copies *him* be not *expressed*, yet in all it is necessarily *implied*, for if they *tempted* in the Wilderness, it is certain that they tempted *Somebody*, and to understand by that *Somebody* any other than *Christ*, who is the *only* Person before *mentioned*, is against all *Grammar* and *Reason:* Against *Grammar*, which allows no other *Accusative* to be understood by the *Verb* than that of some *Thing* or *Person* aforesaid in the *same* Sentence: Against *Reason*, because if we understand any *other* Accusative but *him* or *Christ*, who is the only *Person* afore-mentioned, we must make the Apostle speak *loosely* and *indeterminately*, whereas otherwise it is evident he speaks most *strictly* and *certainly*; for there is no word in the Text, but only *Christ*, which determines the Accusative that the Verb *tempted* implies; so that if that doth not determine it, it must be left wholly *indeterminate*; but if it *doth*, it must be *him* or *Christ:* And to make the holy Oracles speak *loosely* and *vagrantly*, where they may as well be understood to speak *strictly* and *determinately*, is not only *impious* but *unreasonable*. If therefore it was *Christ* that some of the *Jews* tempted in the *Wilderness*, it necessarily follows in the first Place, that Christ was *with* them there; and secondly, that he was that God *against* whom they spake, *Numb.* xxi. 5. which is the Place the Apostle here refers to, where it is said, that *the People spake against God and against Moses*; for which God *sent fiery Serpents among them*, ver. 6. If therefore Christ was *with* them in the Wilderness, and was that God *against* whom they spake in the Wilderness, there is no doubt but that he was that *God* that led them *through* it, and brought them into *Canaan*.

Fourthly, That it was he who dwelt in the *Jewish Tabernacle* and *Temple*, is evident from *John* xii. 41. *These Things said Isaias when he saw his Glory and spake of him*; the occasion of which Words is this; at *ver.* 37. St. *John* takes notice of the *perverse* Infidelity of the *Jews* in not believing in Christ, notwithstanding all the *Miracles* he had shewn them, *ver.* 38, 39, 40. which he shews was no more than what the Prophet *Isaiah* had long before foretold of them, *Isaiah* vi. 9, 10. and then he concludes, *ver.* 41. *These Things said Isaiah when he saw his Glory and spake of him*; where by *his Glory* it is evident the Apostle means *Christ's* Glory, and by *speaking of him*, speaking of *Christ*; for so in *ver.* 37. where the Discourse begins, it is plain he means *Christ*, when he tells us, that *yet they believed not on him*; and in *ver.* 42. it is as plain that it means *him* still, when he tells us, that *nevertheless among the chief Rulers, also many believed in him*; and if by *him* he means *Christ*, as all agree he doth, both in *ver.* 37. and 42. either the four Verses between must be included within a *Parenthesis* (which we have no reason to imagine, seeing there is no *note* of a Parenthesis to be found in any Copy, nor doth the Discourse itself require it, which from Verse to Verse runs all along in a *close* and *continued* dependence) or by *him*, must be meant *Christ*, in *ver.* 41. *also*; and if it was *Christ's Glory* which *Isaiah* saw, and *Christ* of whom he *spake*, then it is evident that Christ was the *God* who inhabited the *Temple*. For so in *Isaiah* vi. 1. (which is the Place St. *John* here refers to) *Isaiah* tells us, that *in the Year that King Uzziah died, he saw the Lord sitting on a Throne high and lifted up, and his Train filled the Temple*; if therefore Christ was this *Lord*, as St. *John* affirms, it is certain, from these Words, that it was *he* who sate upon the *Throne* in the *Temple*, and had his Train or Retinue of Angels there.

Fifthly and *lastly*, That Christ also was that *Jehovah* and *Divine* Lord and King, who, under the most *High Father*, presided over the *Jewish* Church, is evident from several Places of the *New Testament*, compared with the *Old*, from whence they are cited. I shall only instance in Two, the first of which is *Ephes.* ver. 14. *Wherefore he saith*, that is the Prophet *Isaiah*, *awake thou*

that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light; which Words are a *Paraphrastical* Reference to *Isaiah* lx. 1. *Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the Glory of the Lord is risen upon thee:* But now, unless we suppose Christ to be this *Lord* or *Jehovah*, the Prophet is so far from saying here, that *Christ shall give thee light*, as St. *Paul* affirms, that he makes no mention *at all* of him; either therefore *Isaiah* says *no* such thing as, *Christ shall give thee light*, which is to give the *lye* to St. *Paul*; or else the *true* sense of that saying of *Isaiah*, *The Glory of the Lord is risen upon thee*, must be, that *Christ shall give thee light*; which it *cannot* be, if *Christ* and that *Lord* were two *distinct* Persons; but that they are *one* and the *same*, is evident from *Isaiah* xliv. 6. *Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts, I am the first, and I am the last, and besides me there is no God:* which *Divine* Character of *I am the first, and I am the last*, he elsewhere gives himself in Chap. xli. 4 and Chap. xlviii. 12. of this Prophecy. Now this very Character of the God of *Israel* Christ assumes to himself, *Rev.* i. 11. *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last*; so again, *ver.* 17. and *Chap.* ii. 8. and *Chap.* xxii. 13. Now how can we, with any *Reverence* to our Saviour, suppose that he would ever have assumed to himself this *distinguishing* Character of the God of *Israel*, and that in the very same *Words*, and without ever explaining them into a different *Sense*, had he not been the very same Person? Since he could not but foresee that he should hereby endanger the *misleading* of his Church, and *tempting* her into a *false* opinion of his Person. For what Man that was not *prepossessed* with a *contrary* Opinion, would ever have thought that our Saviour did *not* mean *himself* to be the God of *Israel*, when he thus *verbatim* applies to himself his *personal* Character, without any kind of *Restriction* or *Explication?* Should any Man hear a Voice from an invisible Person seriously pronouncing, *I am William the Conquerour*, (as St. *John* did this Voice from Christ, *I am the first and the last)* would he not presently conclude either that *this* Person was the Ghost of that victorious Prince, or that *that* Voice was a design'd *Delusion?* Since therefore our Saviour declares that he is *the first and the last*, which is the *essential* Character by which *Jehovah the King of Israel* describes himself, and doth no where intimate a *different* Sense of this Character, as applied to *himself*, from what it signified, as applied to the *Jehovah*, it necessarily follows, that either he meant not *sincerely*, or that himself and that *Jehovah* the King of *Israel* were the same Person. And accordingly, *Zech.* ix. 9. which all agree is a Prophecy of our Saviour, he is expressly called the King of *Israel*, *Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Sion, shout, O Daughter of Jerusalem, behold thy King cometh unto thee:* The most *natural* Sense of which Phrase, *thy King*, is, he that is *now* thy King, not he that is *hereafter* to be so; and if *then* when this Prophecy was delivered, he was King of the *Daughter of Zion*, or People of *Israel*, to be sure he was *always* so: And therefore the Prophet *Malachi* calls the Temple, which was the Palace of the Divine King of *Israel*, the Temple of *Christ*, Mal. iii. 1. *Behold I will send my Messenger, i. e.* John Baptist, *and he shall prepare my way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his Temple, even the Angel of the Covenant whom ye delight in, behold he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.* From whence I infer, first, that this *Lord of Hosts*, which is the ordinary stile of the God of *Israel*, was *Christ*, whose *Messenger* and Fore-runner *John Baptist* was, *vide Luke* i. 76. And *secondly*, That the *Temple*, which was the Abode of this Lord of Hosts, was the Temple of *Christ*; *the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his Temple*; which cannot be meant of *God the Father*, because in the next Words he is called *the Angel of the Covenant*, which all agree is *Christ*. If then the Temple of *Jerusalem* was the Temple of *Christ*, and he was that *Lord of Hosts* that dwelt in it, it necessarily follows that he was that Divine King of *Israel*, who under God the Father governed the *Jewish* Church. And now having proved at large this Fourth Proposition, which is the *principal* Hinge upon which the *whole* Argument turns, I proceed,

Fifthly, That *after* his coming into the World he ſtill *retained* this his Right and Title of *King of Iſrael* in *particular*, till they finally *rejected* him, and *apoſtatized* from that Covenant on which his *Kingdom* is founded. For he did not at all diveſt himſelf by his *Incarnation*, of that *Royal* Authority he was veſted with, as he was the *Eternal Word*, and *Son of God*, *hereafter* to be incarnate. For this his *Royal* Authority, as I ſhewed before, is neceſſarily implied in his *Mediatorſhip* of the New Covenant, of which, as I have alſo ſhewed, he was *always* Mediator without any *diſcontinuance* or *interruption*. So long therefore as the New Covenant continued in force with the *Jews* in *particular*, ſo long he was their *Mediatorial* King in *particular*, under God the Father. Now it is certain that the New Covenant continued in force with them ſo long as *they* continued to be the *Church of God*, becauſe it was the New Covenant that *made* them ſo; and 'tis certain they continued the Church of God many Years *after* the Incarnation of our Saviour, even 'till ſuch Time as by their *obſtinately* rejecting of our Saviour, and *incurable* Apoſtaſy from that Covenant which made them the *Church* and *People of God*, they had finally *incenſed* him to *reject* them, to *break off his Covenant-relation* to them, and utterly to *diſpark* and *unchurch* them. And therefore we find that for ſeveral Years, both our Saviour and his Apoſtles continued in *cloſe* Communion with the *Jewiſh* Church, frequented *their* Temple and Synagogues, and joined with *them* in all the Solemnities of their Publick Worſhip: By which they owned them to be the *true* Church of God, and conſequently to be *yet* in Covenant with him. Since therefore *they* continued in the New Covenant *after* Chriſt's Incarnation, Chriſt muſt alſo continue the *Mediator* of that Covenant to them, and conſequently *their* Mediatorial King. And hence he is ſtyled, the *King of the Jews* in *particular*, after his Incarnation; for ſo the Wiſe Men in their Enquiry after him, *Where is he that is born King of the Jews?* Matth. ii. 2. And that he was *born King of the Jews*, not merely as he was deſcended from the Loins of *David*, but by a Title that he had *antecedent* to his Birth, *viz.* as he was the *Son of God*, *hereafter* to be Incarnate, is evident by that Confeſſion of *Nathanael*, John i. 49. *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Iſrael*; where his being the *King of Iſrael* is conſequent to his being *the Son of God*; and ſo *John* xii. 13. they who attended him in his Progreſs to *Jeruſalem* ſalute him with a *Bleſſed is the King of Iſrael, that cometh in the Name of the Lord*; which St. *John* makes the Accompliſhment of that fore-mentioned Prophecy, *Zach.* ix. 9 *Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion —— behold thy King cometh unto thee ſitting on an Aſs's Colt*, ver. 14, 15. And this Title our Saviour aſſumes to himſelf in that good Confeſſion he made before *Pontius Pilate*, who asking him, *Art thou King of the Jews?* He anſwered him, *Sayeſt thou this of thyſelf, or did others tell it thee of me?* And when *Pilate* preſſes him for a more *explicite* Anſwer, he tells him, *My Kingdom is not of this World*; as much as if he had ſaid, I know the *Jews*, mine Enemies, have inſinuated to thee, that by aſſuming to myſelf this Title of *King of the Jews*, I deſign to uſurp the *temporal* Dominion of *Cæſar* thy Maſter; but let not that trouble thee, for though it is moſt certain that I am King of the *Jews*, yet my Kingſhip and *Cæſar*'s are of a quite *different* nature, and do no way *claſh* and *interfere* with one another; for, whereas his Kingdom is *temporal*, mine is purely *ſpiritual*, and *not of this World*; and when *Pilate* inſiſts farther, *Art thou a King then?* Jeſus anſwers, *Thou ſayeſt I am a King*, *i e.* *thou* ſayeſt *truly* ſo, *to this end was I born, and for this Cauſe came I into the World, that I ſhould bear Witneſs to the Truth*, John xviii. 33, 34, 35, 36, 37.

And as he retained the *Title* of King of the *Jews*, after his Incarnation, ſo we frequently find him *exerciſing his Royal* Authority among them. For in the firſt Place he not only authoritatively *explained* to them thoſe *old* and *eternal* Laws of Morality which he delivered to them from Mount *Sinai*, and *inforced* them with new *Sanctions* and *Motives*; but he alſo gave them two *new* Laws, *viz.* that of *Baptiſm*, and that of the *Lord's Supper*, to be continued in force to the end of the World. *Secondly*, he erected a *perpetual*

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Form of *Government* and *Discipline* in his Church, and gave Commission to his Apostles to *exercise* and *administer* it, and to derive down *their* Commission to all succeding Generations. *Thirdly*, he *actually* forgave Sins, *Matth.* ix. 2. compared with the Sixth, where he doth not only pronounce to one that was sick of the Palsie, *Son, thy Sins are forgiven thee*; but declares, that he did it by that *Power* and *Authority* which *he had upon Earth to forgive Sins.* All which being Acts of *Regal* Power, do sufficiently manifest, that even whilst he was upon Earth, he was vested with *Royal* Authority, and that by assuming our Nature he did not divest himself of his ancient *Royalty*, but still continued *King of the Jews*, so long as they continued a Church.

Sixthly, That though the *main Body* of the People of *Israel rejected* Christ, and were thereupon rejected *by* him, yet there was a *Remnant* of them that *received* and *acknowledged* him for their *rightful* Lord and King. For so, as St. *Paul* observes, it is foretold of *Isaiah* concerning *Israel, Though the Number of the Children of* Israel *be as the Sand of the Sea, a Remnant shall be saved*, Rom. ix. 27. and accordingly it *proved* in the *Event:* For though the much *greater* Part of the *Jewish* Nation *obstinately* persisted in their *Infidelity* and *Rebellion* against the blessed *Jesus* their *King*, notwithstanding all those *powerful* Arts and Methods he had used to *reclaim* and *save* them; yet there was a great Number of them that *willingly* received, and *loyally* adhered to him: For not only the *Disciples* which he gathered whilst he was upon *Earth*, but also the first *Converts* after his Ascension into *Heaven*, were generally of the *Jewish* Nation, within which, not only his own *Personal* Ministry was confined, but also the Ministry of his *Apostles* for some time *after* his Ascension: For so St. *Paul* and *Barnabas* tell the *Jews*, *That it was necessary the Word of God should first have been spoken to them*, Acts xiii. 46. But this Proposition is so manifest from the whole Gospel, that I should not need to insist any farther upon it.

Seventhly, Therefore that this *Remnant* still continued the same *individual* Church or Kingdom of Christ with the *former*, though very much *reformed* and *improved:* For it still remained upon the same *Basis* with the former, as having the self-same *Covenant* for its *Charter*, which is the *Form* that *Identifies* all Societies, and, notwithstanding the perpetual *Change* and *Renovation* of their *Parts*, still continues them the same *individual* Politick Bodies. Since therefore that *Remnant* of *Israel*, who *believed* in Christ, continued still in the *same* Covenant with that whereupon the *old Jewish* Church was founded, it necessarily follows, that they were not a *new* or *distinct* Church, but still remained the same *individual* sacred Society with the *old*. So that they were the *unbelieving Jews* that *revolted* from their *old* Church, by *rejecting* the Mediator of that Covenant, by which it was *formed* and *constituted*; but as for the *believing Jews*, who *embraced* and *acknowledged* him, they still *continued* in it, and so remained the same continued Church, as being still *united* and *incorporated* by the *same* Charter.

But, though it was the same continued Body with the old *Jewish* Church; yet was it very much *reformed* and *improved* by our blessed Saviour. For, in the first place, whereas before it was extreamly *corrupted* through the many *false* Glosses and *superstitious* Traditions of their Elders, and, like an undress'd Garden was all over-grown with *Thorns* and *Weeds*, its Religion being almost *dwindled* away into *Ceremonies*, and outward *Observances*, and *evaporated* into a dead *Shew* and *Formality*; our blessed Saviour repaired its *Ruins* and *Decays*, removed its *Rubbish*, and reformed its *Disorders*, and restored it to its Primitive *Beauty* and *Purity:* For the great Design of all his Sermons and Parables, was to *explain* the Laws of it into their *Genuine* Sense, and to *rescue* them from the *false* Glosses and Comments of the Scribes and Pharisees; to *reprehend* and *expose* its *Hypocrisy* and *Formality*, and to *refine* its Religion from all those *corrupt* and *heterogeneous* Mixtures, with which it was *dash'd* and *sophisticated.* That *Remnant* of the *Jews* therefore who *believed* in Christ, and *submitted* to his Doctrine, when all the *rest* of them finally *rejected* him, were

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the same *individual continued* Body with the *Old Jewish* Church, as *purified* and *reformed* from its *Errors* and *Corruptions:* For, by *submitting* to our Saviour's *Regulations*, they did not commence into a *new* Church, but still continued the *same* Body, only with *this* Difference, that whereas before it was *distempered* with sundry *corrupted* Humours, now it was throughly *purged* and *recovered*.

And as our Saviour *restored* that Church to its *ancient* Purity; so, *Secondly*, he *advanced* and *improved* it to a far more *perfect* State than it was in, even under its *primitive* Constitution. It is true, as for the Religion of that Church, it was for *Substance* the same with that which our Saviour and his Apostles taught: It proposed to them the same *Covenant*, and the same *Mediator*, and the very same *Doctrines*, and *Articles* concerning this Mediator, to create in them the same *Belief*, and oblige them to the same *Practice*, only with *this* difference, that whereas it proposed him to *their* Belief as *hereafter* to be *incarnate* and *sacrificed*, to *rise*, and to *ascend* into Heaven, it proposes him to *ours* as *actually* incarnate and sacrificed, and as *actually* risen and ascended: But this is only a *circumstantial* Difference, since that, as to all Purposes of his Mediation, his *future* Incarnation and Sacrifice, &c. had the same *Virtue* and *Influence* with his *actual*. But though as to the *main*, the ancient *Jewish* Religion was the same with *ours*, yet, in respect of *Clearness*, and *Easiness*, and *Amplitude*, there is a *vast* Difference between them: For, *first*, as to *Clearness*, it is evident, that it was much more *darkly* and *obscurely* revealed to the ancient *Jews*, than it is to *us*; for to *them* it was revealed only either in general Promises, out of which they were fain to argue and deduce *Particulars*; or in *Temporal* Promises, that carried a *mystical* Sense with them, and *obscurely* implied the *Spiritual* Blessings which the Gospel proposes; or in dark *Types* and material *Figures* and *Emblems*, which were *Prophetick Pictures*, or, as the Apostle calls them, *Shadows of good Things to come:* For thus, in that *general* Promise, *In thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed*, was included *Christ*, and all those *particular* Blessings which we receive *by* and *through* him: Under those *temporal* Promises of Deliverance from their Enemies, and peaceable Possession of *Canaan*, was *couched* their Deliverance from *Sin* and *Hell*, and their *eternal* Rest and Happiness in *Heaven*; and under their *legal* Sacrifices, the *all-sufficient* Sacrifice of the blessed Mediator was *exhibited* and *represented* to them; and in a word, under the High Priest's *offering* the Blood of the Sacrifice in the *Holy of Holies*, was *intimated* the Mediator's *Intercession* for them in *Heaven*. Thus both the *Promises* and *Types* of the *Jewish* Religion, were all of them *obscure* Revelations of *Christianity*, which is nothing but *Mystical* Judaism, or Judaism *explained* into its Spiritual Sense and Meaning. And accordingly the Apostle makes a *Jew*, according to the *spiritual* Sense of the *Jewish* Religion, to be the same with a *Christian*; *for he is not a Jew*, saith he, *i. e.* in a *spiritual* Sense, *that is one outwardly*, *neither is that Circumcision which is outward in the Flesh, but he is a* Jew *who is one inwardly*, *i. e.* who is a *Jew* according to the *inward* and *spiritual* Sense of Judaism; and *Circumcision is that of the Heart, in the Spirit, and not in the Letter, whose Praise is not of Men, but of God*, Rom. ii. 28, 29. and if the *spiritual Jew* be a *Christian*, then the *spiritual Judaism* must be *Christianity*. But though this *obscure* Revelation of Christianity was sufficient to enable Men, that *sincerely* attended to it, to *grope* out their way to eternal Happiness; yet it is impossible it should ever give them, without some *farther* Revelation, a *distinct* and *explicite* Understanding of it. In *general*, they understood that there was a *rich* Vein of spiritual *Sense* running all through the *Letter* of their Law; that there were *glorious* Mysteries *wrapt up* within those *weak and beggarly Elements*, like *precious* Diamonds under a rough Coat: For so not only the Author to the *Hebrews*, but also *Philo* the *Jew*, in his *Allegories of the Law*, and almost in all his other Writings, makes the *Rites* and *Ceremonies* of the *Jewish* Religion to be *Types* and *Figures* of *Divine* and *Moral* Truths: and particularly the *High Priest* and his *Vestments* to be a Figure of the *eternal Word* and his *Perfections*. And as they understood

this in general, so from sundry Passages in the Book of the *Psalms*, it is apparent that the *good Jews* had a prospect beyond the *Outside* and *Letter* of their Law, even into the Mystical *Sense* and *Meaning* of it; and that, through its dark *Shadows*, they saw a great deal of the *Substance* and *Reality* of the Gospel. Hence *David* observes in *Psal.* xxv. 14. that *the secret*, i. e. Mystery, *of the Lord is with them that fear him*; *and he shall shew them his Covenant*; which implies, that there was something of a *Cabala* of the *spiritual* Sense of the Law, among the *true Israelites*, by which they were instructed a great deal farther than the bare *Letter* and *Outside* of it; especially considering that Prayer of *David*, Psalm cxix. 18. *Open thou mine Eyes, that I may behold wondrous Things out of thy Law*; which is a plain Argument, that under the *literal* sense of that Law, which was *plain* and *obvious*, and had nothing of *depth* or *mystery*, he saw a *spiritual* and *mystical* Sense, in which some very *wonderful* Truths were included. For if there had been no more in it than the *literal* meaning, it is not to be imagined he would have prayed as he doth, *Ver.* 19. *Hide not thy Commandments from me*; and *v.* 27. *Make me to understand the way of thy Precepts*; *so shall I talk of thy wondrous Works*; which plainly shews that there were *Mysteries* couched under the *Letter* of the Law, which were both *wonderful* in *themselves*, and very *difficult* to be *understood*: And accordingly, *ver.* 69. he tells us, that *he had seen an end of all Perfections, but that God's Commandments were exceeding broad.* Which shews that he had *discovered* something in that Law beyond the *literal* sense of it (which was far from being *exceeding broad)* even a vast Mine of *mystical* sense, whose *bottom* he was not able to reach. Now this *mystical* sense, as hath been shewed, was *Christianity*, which under *that* Dispensation of it was so *overcast* with *Clouds* and *Darkness*, that in all probability the most *pious* and *inquisitive* Minds had but very *imperfect* and *confused* Apprehensions of it.

But, when our Saviour came into the World, he *unveiled* the *Jewish* Religion, and *decyphered* all those *mystical* Characters wherein its *spiritual* sense was expressed; and what he had revealed *before* only in *obscure* Generals, and *mysterious Types*, he *now* deliver'd to the World in *plain* and *explicite* Articles of Faith. And having *unriddled* all those *Types* and *Shadows*, and turned them *inside outwards*, and revealed their *hidden* sense to the World in *plain* and *naked* Propositions, he utterly *repealed* and *abrogated* them, as Things of no farther *use*; those sacred Truths which they *contained*, and darkly *intimated*, being *now* made *manifest*, and set forth to open view in a far more *clear* and *glorious* Light. For the proper *use* and *design* of those *Types* was to teach the *Gospel*; so the Apostle, *The Law was our School-master, to bring us unto Christ*, Gal. iii. 24. But it is evident they were designed to teach it but *darkly* and *mysteriously*. For the *Jews* being bred among the *Ægyptians*, who were wont to express their *divine* and *moral* Doctrines by *sensible* Images or Hieroglyphicks; God in compliance therewith (the *Jews* being infinitely fond of the Manners of *Ægypt)* thought it meet at first to express the Gospel to them in the same *typical* manner, *i. e.* to represent the whole *Method* and *Oeconomy* of it in *visible* Signs and Figures, which he intended only for a *rude* draught of the Gospel; which he purposed *afterwards* to draw to the *Life*, and express more *clearly* and *exactly*. When therefore our Saviour had *fully* revealed to the World the *sense* and *meaning* of those *Types*, and expressed what they did so *mysteriously* signify, in *plain* and *clear* Propositions, they from thenceforth became altogether *useless*, and for that reason were *repealed*, and utterly *expunged* out of the *Rubrick* of divine Worship. So that now the Gospel, which hitherto ran under ground in a *dark* and *mysterious* Channel, broke forth into a *visible* stream from underneath the surface of *Types* and *Shadows* which had hitherto *covered*, and in a great measure *concealed*, it from the sight and view of the World. And therefore we need no longer *grope* after it among *Shadows* and *Umbrages*, as the good *Jews* were fain to do under the *Mosaick* Dispensation; these Doctrines of it which before were *all Mystery* and *overcast* with

Types and Shadows, being now brought forth from behind the Curtain into *open view*, and preſented *barefaced* to our Underſtandings in a moſt *plain*, and *eaſy*, and *familiar* ſenſe. Since therefore the *Types* of the *Law*, and *Jeſus Chriſt* taught the *ſame* Religion, and only *he* taught more *plainly* and *clearly* what *they* taught more *darkly* and *myſteriouſly*, it hence neceſſarily follows, that thoſe *believing* Jews who *received* and *acknowledged* Chriſt, eſpouſed no *new* Religion; but ſtill adhered to that *good old* Religion which the *ſignificant* Rites and Ceremonies of their Law had *all along* preached to them; and that it was only the *unbelieving* Jews who *rejected* Chriſt's Doctrine, that were the true *Apoſtates* from the *ancient* Judaiſm, which *preached* and *exhibited* to them all thoſe *holy Myſteries*, of which the Religion of our Saviour is compoſed; but as for thoſe of them who *believed* in Jeſus, they continued ſtedfaſt in the *myſtick* and *ſpiritual* ſenſe of their *ancient* Religion; and, though they forſook their old *School-maſter*, the Law, under which they had been *trained* and *educated*, yet ſtill they retained their old *Leſſon*: For the Doctrine of *Jeſus* was the *ſtanding* Doctrine of their *Legal Types*, which *they* taught *darkly* and *obſcurely*, but he moſt *clearly* and *diſtinctly*; and therefore, though thoſe *believing* Jews ſtill continued in the ſame *Doctrine*, yet they had very good reaſon to change their *Teacher*, and from being the Diſciples of the *Law*, to become the Diſciples of *Jeſus*, under whoſe Inſtruction they were ſure to improve far *beyond* what they had hitherto done under their *old Maſter*. Since therefore Chriſtianity is nothing but the ancient Judaiſm *explained* and *unriddled*, it hence neceſſarily follows, that the *believing* Jews, by *embracing* it, did not commence a *new Church* diſtinct from the *ancient* Jewiſh one, but were the *ſame* Church, ſtill *continued* and *improved*; the ſame *Church*, becauſe founded on the ſame *Religion*; but the ſame Church *improved*, becauſe enlightned with a far more *diſtinct* and *explicite* knowledge of that Religion.

And, as our Saviour did very much improve the Religion of the Jewiſh Church in reſpect of *clearneſs* and *perſpicuity*, ſo he did alſo in reſpect of *eaſineſs*. For beſides thoſe many *Rites* and *Ceremonies* which the Law of *Moſes* ſuper-added to it, as *Types* and *Shadows* of the Goſpel, there were ſundry *others* ſuper-added to it by the ſame Law, partly in *Conformity* to the more *innocent* Rites of the *Ægyptians*, among whom the *Jews* were *educated*, and of whoſe Rites and Manners they were pertinaciouſly *fond*; and partly in *oppoſition* to their *Magical* and *Idolatrous* ones, *vide Vol.* 1. *p.* 59, 60. For the *Primitive* Jewiſh Religion was that which the Patriarchs and their Poſterity profeſſed and practiced *before* the giving of the *Law*, and to which the *Ceremonial* Law was but a *ſuper-addition*; but by reaſon of the vaſt *number* of Rites and Ceremonies which this Law contained (which yet conſidering their *ſtate* and *temper* was very *neceſſary* for them) their Religion was rendred exceeding *cumberſome* and *grievous* to them: And therefore the Apoſtle juſtly calls it *a Yoke which neither they nor their Fore-fathers were able to bear*, Acts xv. 10. But our Saviour, when he came into the World, who was the *ſubſtance* and *accompliſhment* of all thoſe *Ceremonial* Types and *Prophetick* Pictures, *unloaded* it of all thoſe *burthenſome* Appendages, and thereby reſtored it to that ancient *eaſe* and *liberty* in which it was, *before* that *yoke of Bondage* was impoſed on it: Nay, and not only ſo, but alſo render'd it more eaſy than ever; for whereas before the Law, it had annexed to it that *painful* Rite of *Circumciſion*, which was the *Primitive* Seal of that Religion or Covenant, our bleſſed Saviour exchanged it for a much *gentler* and *eaſier*, *viz.* that of *Baptiſm*. For whereas *Circumciſion* was not only an *infamous* Rite among the greateſt Part of the *Gentile* World, and upon that account unfit to be the *ſign* of *initiation* into the Church of Chriſt, which was now to be *enlarged* and *propagated* through the World; but alſo a *bloody* and *painful* one, and upon that account more apt to affright Men *from*, than to initiate them *into* his Church; *Baptiſm* was a Rite that both *Jews* and *Gentiles reverenced*, and that is very *eaſy* and *practicable* in its own Nature. So that whereas the *ancient* Judaiſm was rendred

a *yoke of Bondage* (as the Apostle calls it, *Gal.* v. 10.) thro' those *numerous* Rites and Ceremonies that were super-induced upon it, our Saviour *disburthened* it of them *all*, and thereby rendered it an *easy yoke*, as he himself calls it, *Matth.* xi. 30. Since therefore Christianity, for the *main*, is nothing but the ancient Judaism *released* from the *Bondage* of the Ceremonial Law, and restored to its Primitive *easiness* and *freedom*, it hence follows, that by *embracing* Christ and his Doctrine, the *believing* Jews did not turn to a *new* Religion, nor consequently constitute a *new* Church, but still continued in their *Old* Religion which our Saviour only *bettered* and *improved*, and rendered far more *easy* and *practicable*.

Thirdly and *lastly*, Our Saviour very much improved the *Jewish* Church and Religion in respect of the *extent* and *universality* of it. It is true, the *Gentiles*, who *embraced* the *Jewish Religion*, were always allowed *admission* into the *Jewish Church*. For so at first, not only *Abraham* himself and his *Children*, but his *Servants* also were admitted into *Covenant* with God, and thereby made his *Church* and People. And in the Reigns of *David* and *Solomon*, as Mr. *Selden*, *de Jure*, *lib.* 2. *cap.* 2. observes, there were *vast* Numbers of *Converts* to the *Jewish* Church out of all the *Neighbouring* Nations; and in *Ahasuerus*'s Reign, *many of the People of the Land* of *Media* and *Persia*, *became Jews*, Esther viii. 17. and afterwards in *Hyrcanus*'s Reign the *whole* Nation of the *Idumeans* embraced the *Jewish* Religion; all which, and many more, as the *true* Children of *Abraham*'s *Faith*, were by *Circumcision* initiated into the Covenant God made with *him* and his *Posterity*, and thereby became *Co-members* with them of the same *Corporation*, and *Co-heirs* to the same *Promises*. But, though the *Gate* of the *Jewish* Church was never *shut* against the *Gentiles*, yet, as I shewed before, there were *sundry* of the Rites of that Church, instituted on purpose to *divide* and *separate* the *Jews* from the *Gentiles*, to create a *distance* and mutual *strangeness* between them; that thereby the *Jews* might be *preserved* and *secured* from *mingling* with the *Gentile Idolatries*. Now by these *distinguishing* Rites, which begat an inveterate mutual *prejudice* between the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, the *Jewish* Church was very much *narrowed* and *contracted*. For in the first place these distinguishing Rites, by prejudicing the *Jews* against the *Gentiles*, restrained *them* from all *free* converse and communication *with* them, and thereby from *propagating* their Religion *among* them: And *secondly*, by prejudicing the *Gentiles* against the *Jews*, they also prejudiced *them* against the *Jewish Religion*, and rendered their Minds extremely *averse* to the entertainment of it. Thus as these Ceremonious *singularities* of the *Jewish* Church were to the *Jews* great *Preservatives* against the *Idolatries* of the *Gentiles*, so to the *Gentiles* they were very great *Hindrances* of their *Conversion* to the *Religion* of the *Jews*. And therefore our Saviour, in order to his design of propagating *Christianity* among the *Gentiles*, which is the true *Spirit* and *Mystery* of *Judaism*, found it necessary to remove it from these *offensive* Rites, which lay as so many *stumbling Blocks* in the way to the Conversion of the *Gentiles* to it, and so by *pulling down this middle Wall of Partition* between the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and *abolishing this enmity of Ordinances*, which created such a vast *distance* between them, he *opened* and *prepared* the way to the Conversion of the *Gentiles*, and took a most *prudent* and *effectual* Course to *make Peace* between them and the *Jews*, and to *reconcile them both into one Body in the Cross*, and hereby to *extend* and *enlarge* the Church into an *Universal* Corporation.

In short therefore, Christianity being nothing else but only Judaism *separated* from all those *Appendages* of it, which rendered it *obscure* and *burthensome*, and *narrow*, it hence follows, that that *Remnant* of *Jews* who *received* and *embraced* it, were so far from *renouncing* their *old* Religion, that they still *admitted*, and *professed*, and *adhered* to it under its greatest *Advantages* and *Improvements*; that they renounced nothing of it, but only its comparative *Defects*, and did only *admit* of these new *Reformations* of it, by which our Saviour advanced it to its utmost *Lustre* and *Perfection*, and rendered it infinitely more *clear*, and *easy*,

easie and *extensive:* And since it was their *old* Religion thus *reformed* and *improved* that they still *embraced* and *continued* in, upon their turning *Christians*, it necessarily follows, that they did not become a *new*, *distinct* Church, but were only a *continued* Succession of the *old* one. And hence it is that Christians in the *New Testament* are sometimes called *Jews*, Rev. ii. 9. *i. e. reformed Jews*, or, which is the same, *true* Christians; and sometimes the *Israel of God*, Gal. vi. 16. and sometimes *the Children of Abraham*, Gal. iii. 7. and sometimes *a chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, an Holy Nation, a peculiar People*, which is the proper Character of the *Jews*; because by their *Faith* and *Religion*, which is nothing but the *true spiritual* and *mystick* Judaism, they were *Jews* and *Israelites*, and *the Children of Abraham*; though they were not *all* so according to the *Flesh*, as the Apostle distinguishes, 1 *Cor.* x. 18. and hence also it is that the Christian Church is called the *new Jerusalem*, Rev. iii. 12. because it is nothing but the *old Jerusalem*, or *Jewish* Church *renewed* and *enlarged*.

Eighthly and *lastly*, That to this *individual* Church or Kingdom of Christ, thus *reformed* and *improved*, was *supperadded* all those *Gentiles* that were *afterwards* converted to Christianity. When the *main* Body of the *Jews* had *rejected* our Saviour, his Kingdom was reduced to a very *narrow* compass, and consisted only of one *single* Congregation of Christians in *Jerusalem*; which, through the Blessing of God, upon the *indefatigable* Industry of his *Apostles* and *Disciples*, was by degrees *spread* and *dilated* over all the World: For this *single* Congregation was the Primitive *Root*, out of which the vast *Stock* of the Catholick Church *sprung*, which hath since *branched* forth itself into *particular* Churches to all the Ends of the Earth: For it is of *this* Church that the Apostle speaks, *Acts* ii. 47. when he tells us, that *the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.* So that all that were *converted* to the Faith of Christ, were but so many *Additions* to this *Primitive* Church, so many *living Stones* incorporated into this *spiritual Building*, which by the Industry of its *Builders*, did soon *increase* and *multiply* into several *other* Congregations; and these Congregations, though they were *several*, yet were not *separate* or *independent*, but continued all of them *united* to the *first*, as Homogeneous *Parts* growing out of the same *Body*, or distinct *Apartments* superadded to the same *Building*. So that the Christian Church *began* in *one* Congregation, and by degrees *enlarged* itself, like a *fruitful* Stock, by *branching* forth itself into *other Congregations*, in a continued *Unity* with its *own* Body, which, for the convenience of *Worship* and *Discipline*, were afterwards formed into *several* though not *separate* particular Churches, under the Conduct of their particular *Pastors* and *Governours*. And thus all the particular Churches that are now in the World, are only so many *Lines* drawn from this *Primitive Center*, and united in it; and it is upon this Account particularly that they all of them constitute but *one* Catholick Church; because they all grew out of *one*, and so are but *Comparts* of the same *Body*, and *Branches* of the same *Root*, and are only that *one* Primitive Church *multiplied* into several Churches living in the same Catholick *Communion* and *Unity*. And accordingly the *Gentile* Converts are said to be *grafted* in the *Jewish* Church, which the Apostle calls the *good Olive-tree*, in *Rom.* xi. 17, 18. *For if some of the Branches*, that is, the unbelieving *Jews*, *be broken off*, *i. e.* rejected from being any more the Church and People of God, *and thou being a wild Olive-tree*, growing in the wild Common of the World, without the Pale and Inclosure of God's Church, *wert grafted in among them*, *i. e.* incorporated with the believing *Jews*, and made a Member of the Body of their Church, *and with them partakest of the Root and Fatness of the Olive-Tree*, *i. e.* communicatest with them in all the Blessings of God's Promise to *Abraham*, which is the Foundation of their Church, *boast not against the Branches*; *but if thou boast*, consider *thou bearest not the Root, but the Root thee*, *i. e.* the *Jewish* Church grew not out of *thee*, but *thou* out of *that*; *she* is no Branch of *thee*, but *thou* of *her*, as being ingrafted into *her* Stock, and added to her Communion. By which it is evident that the *converted Gentiles* were all but so

many

many *Superadditions* to that *Primitive* Church of *Jerusalem*, which was the only *Remainder* of the *ancient Jewish* Church, and which from one *single* Congregation, did by degrees *increase* and *multiply* itself into an *infinite* number of *particular* Churches, in *Union* with *itself*, from one end of the World to the other.

And this, in short, is the *Progress* of Christ's *Kingdom*, which from *Adam* to *Abraham*, consisted of all such as were *true Worshippers* of God, of whatsoever *Kindred* or *Nation*, from *Abraham* to Jesus Christ, *principally* of the *Jewish* Nation; and when the *greatest* Part of that Nation had *revolted* from Christ, and renounced their Relation to him, his Kingdom extended no farther than to the *small* Remnant of the *Jews* that *adhered* to him, who made up but one *single* Congregation; which Congregation, by the Diligence of its Ministers, and the Blessing of God, *increased* and *propagated* from itself vast Numbers of other Congregations, and these were formed into *particular* Churches, which, like so many conquer'd *Provinces*, were still *united* to that Primitive *Kingdom*, till at last, by a continued *Accession* of new *Conquests*, it was *spread* and *enlarged* into an *universal Empire*.

SECT. VIII.

Of the Nature *and* Constitution *of Christ's* Kingdom.

THE *Kingdom* of Christ and the *Church* of Christ are *Phrases* of a *promiscuous* use in Holy Scripture, and do import the same thing. Thus *Matth.* xvi. 18, 19. *Thou art* Peter, *and upon this Rock will I build my Church, and I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*; where the *Church* and the *Kingdom of Heaven* are the same thing. And thus, to be *translated into the Kingdom of Christ*, Col. i. 13. and *called to the Kingdom of Christ*, 1 Thess. ii. 12. imports no more than to be made a *Member* of the *Church* of Christ. And thus also by *the Kingdom*, Matth. xiii. 38. *by the Kingdom of God*, Matth. xxi. 31. *by the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. xi. 12. and by *the Kingdom of Christ*, Rev. xi. 15 no other Thing can be intended, but only the *Church* of Christ.

I confess, the *Kingdom* of Christ taken in the *largest* Sense, extends a great deal *farther* than the *Church* of Christ: For under God the Father he is *universal* Lord and King of the *World*; his *Kingly* Power being upon his *Ascension* into Heaven extended, as was shewn before, to the *utmost* Limits of the *Universe*: For so he himself tells us by way of Anticipation, that God hath *given him Power over all Flesh*, John xvii. 2. *i. e.* over *all Mankind*: For his *Regal* Power extends as far as his Power of *judging*, which is one of the principal *Acts* of his *Regality*, and his Power of judging is over *all Mankind*; for so we are assured that God *hath appointed a Day, in which he will judge the World by the Man Christ Jesus*, Acts xvii. 31. and that Christ is *ordained of God to be the Judge of Quick and Dead*, Acts x. 42. and not only so, but that when he shall *sit down upon the Throne of his Glory, all Nations shall be gathered before him*, Matth. xxv. 31, 32. Since therefore by the Right of his *Royalty* he shall judge all *Nations*, it necessarily follows, that *all Nations* are under his *Empire* and *Dominion*: and accordingly the Apostle tells us, that God hath *set him at his own right Hand in the heavenly Places, far above all Principality, and Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his Feet, and gave him to be Head over all Things to the Church*, Ephes. i. 20, 21, 22. So that the *Kingdom* of Christ, in a *large* Sense, extends to *all Nations* in the World, even to the *Heathens* and *Infidels*, that never heard of his Name, and upon this account he is styled, *The blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, 1 Tim. vi. 15. and so also *Rev.* xvii. 14.

But

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But the *Church* is more *peculiarly* his *Kingdom*, as consisting of *that* part of the World, which *owns* and *acknowledges* his *Authority*, makes a *visible* Profession of *Fealty* to him, and *Submission* to his Laws and Regulations. As for the *other* Parts of the World, they are all *of right* his *Subjects*, by virtue of that *Universal Regal Authority*, wherewith the most High God and Father of all Things hath *invested* him; but, *de facto*, they are *Slaves* to the *Prince of Darkness*, all whose *Dominions* in *this* World are nothing but *Usurpations* on the *Kingdom* of Christ. But the *Church* is *that* Part of the World that hath *thrown off* the *Yoke* of this *Usurper*, and, by a *solemn* Profession, *surrender'd* up itself to the *Authority* of Christ, its *rightful* Lord and Sovereign; and hence the Members of the Church are said to be *translated out of the Kingdom of Darkness into the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, Col. i. 15.

The *Church* therefore being more *peculiarly* Christ's Kingdom, as being that Part of the World which is actually subjected to him, and under his Government, I shall, with as much Brevity as the Argument will admit, enquire into the *Nature* and *Constitution* of it. In General therefore the *Church* or *Kingdom* of Christ may be thus defined: It is *the one Universal Society of all Christian People, incorporated by the New Covenant in Baptism, under Jesus Christ its supreme Head, and distributed under lawful Governours and Pastors into particular Churches, holding Communion with each other in all the Essentials of Christian Faith, and Worship, and Discipline:* For our better understanding of which Definition, it will be necessary to explain the several Parts of it.

First therefore, It is *the one Universal Society of all Christian People.*

Secondly, Of all Christian People *incorporated by the New Covenant.*

Thirdly, Of all Christian People incorporated by the New Covenant *in Baptism.*

Fourthly, Of all Christian People incorporated *under Jesus Christ, its supreme Head and Governour.*

Fifthly, It is a Society of all Christian People, *distributed into particular Churches.*

Sixthly, It is distributed into particular Churches, *under lawful Pastors and Governours.*

Seventhly, It is distributed into particular Churches, *holding Communion with each other.*

Eighthly, The Communion which these particular Churches hold with each other is,

First, In all the *Essentials* of Christian *Faith*; and,

Secondly, In all the *Essentials* of Christian *Worship.*

Thirdly, In all the *Essentials* of Christian *Discipline.*

First, The *Church* or *Kingdom* of Christ is *one Universal Society*, consisting of all Christian People, who, as was shewn before, were at *first* comprised in one *single Congregation* at *Jerusalem*, and *then* this single Congregation was the *whole Church* or *Kingdom* of Christ, which by the continual Accession of *new* Converts, *increased* and *multiplied* by degrees, till *at length* it was *spread* over the whole Earth. So that the Christian Society, as it is now *enlarged*, is nothing but that *Primitive* Church *diffused* and *dilated:* For it was not diffused into *separate* and *independent* Societies, but into *similar* Parts and Members of the *same* Society: and therefore as a Man is *one* and the *same* Person when he is *full grown*, as he was when he was an *Infant* but of a *span long*, because his Growth consists not in an addition of other *Persons* to him, but only of other *Parts* of the same Person; so the *Church* of Christ is the same *individual* Church *now*, since it is grown to this *vast* Bulk and Proportion, that it was in its *Infant* State, when it extended no farther than one *single* Congregation; because it grew not into *other divided* Churches, but only into other distinct *Parts* of the *same* Church, and therefore since its Growth consisted only in new Accessions of *similar* Parts to the *same* Body, it must be as much *one* Body or Society *now*, as it was at *first*, when it was but one *single* Congregation. For this

this Congregation was the *Root* out of which the Catholick Church *sprang*, or, as our Saviour phrases it, *the Grain of Mustard-seed*, which, though a very small Seed, shot up into a *mighty* Tree, in whose *far-spread* Branches the Birds of the Air came and lodged; and therefore as the *Stock* and *Branches* grow up from the *Root* in a continued *Union* with it, and *all together* make but *one* Tree, so all the *Christian People* in the World *sprang* out of this *single* Congregation, and as they sprang, were still *incorporated* and *united* to it, so as that *all together* they make but *one* Church. And this is that which in our Creed is called the *Holy Catholick* or Universal *Church:* For, so the Apostle tells us, that there is but *one Body*, or Church, as well as *one Spirit*, *one Lord*, *one Faith*, *and one Baptism*, Ephes. iv. 5, 6. and our Saviour tells us, *Other Sheep have I*, meaning the *Gentiles*, (*which are not of this Fold*, meaning the *Jewish Church*; *and they shall hear my Voice*, *and there shall be one Fold and one Shepherd*, John x. 16. For so the *Gentiles*, added to the *Christian Jewish* Church, are said *of twain to make one new Man*, Eph. ii. 13. and both together are compared to a *Building fitly framed together*, *growing into an holy Temple in the Lord*, ibid. *ver.* 21. And indeed, since all *Christians* do enjoy *in common*, and without any *Distinction*, the same *Privileges* and *Immunities*, they must of Necessity be all of the same *Community:* For it is by their *peculiar* Faith, and Laws, and Rites of Worship, and Promises, and Privileges, that the *Christian Society* is distinguished from the rest of the World; and therefore since these *Peculiarities* are, by the very *Institution* of Christian Society, made *common* to all Christian People, it is nonsense to suppose them *distinguished* by *that* Institution into *separate* and *independent* Communities: For how can they be separate Societies, which have nothing to separate and distinguish them, but enjoy all Things *in common* with one another?

Secondly, The Church is one universal Society of all Christian People *incorporated by the New Covenant:* For this is that which distinguishes *regular* Societies from *confused* Multitudes, that whereas the *latter* are only *locally* united, so that as soon as ever their Parts are dispersed into distant *Places*, they cease to *be*, and are utterly *dissolved*; the *former* are united by *Laws* and mutual *Stipulations*, which are the Political *Nerves* and *Arteries*, by which their several Parts, how remote and distant soever, are united to one another; even as it is in our *City-Companies*, which are not only *united* while their Members are met together in their *Common Halls*, but do also *continue united* after they are *dispersed* abroad to their several Homes; because that which unites them is not their being together in the same *Place*, but their being obliged together under the same *Laws* and *Stipulations*, and communicating with one another in the *Duties* and *Privileges* of one and the same *Charter*; by reason whereof, though they suffer a *continual* Defluence of *old*, and Access of *new* Parts, yet still they remain the same Societies; (even like *natural* Bodies that are under a *perpetual* Flux of Parts) because they still retain the same *Laws* and *Charters*, which are the statick *Principles* or *Forms* that *individuate* them, and keep them still the *same*. And thus it is with the *Church*, which partakes of the *common* Nature of all other *formed* and *regular* Societies. For hence, in Scripture, it is called *a Kingdom*, *a City*, or *Commonwealth*, and compared to a natural *Organized* Body, to denote that it is a *regular* Society, all whose Parts are *united* together by legal *Bonds* and *Ligaments*. Now the legal Bond which *unites* the Church, and renders all its Members *one* regular Corporation, is the *New Covenant*; by which all Christian People are in *one* Body obliged to all the *Duties* it requires, and *entitled* to all the *Privileges* it proposes, and by being all *engaged* together in this one *Covenant*, whereby they are all *concerned* together in the same common *Duties* and *Privileges*, they are all *incorporate* together into the same *Community*. And thus it was that the *Jewish* People were all *united* into *one* Church, by their being all *confederated* as one Party in one and the same *Covenant*, whereby they *all* engaged themselves, as *one* Body, to be God's People, and God engaged himself to them, as to one Body,

to

to be *their* God; which in *Deut.* xxvi. 17, 18. is thus expressed, *Thou hast avouched this Day the Lord to be thy God, and to walk in his Ways, and to keep his Statutes, and his Commandments; and the Lord hath avouched thee this Day to be his peculiar People, as he hath promised thee. This,* therefore, was that which *united* them into one Religious *Society,* that they were all *confederated* with God in one and the same *Covenant.* For, thus saith God, *I entred into Covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine,* Ezek. xvi. 8. and hence God is said to be *Married* to that People, *Jer.* iii. 14. and to be their *Husband,* Isaiah liv. 5. because by the *Covenant,* which like a *Matrimonial Engagement,* was *transacted* between God and them, they were all united into one *Spouse,* and *contracted* to one *Husband.* And in the same sense the *Christian* Church is called the *Bride* and the *Spouse* of Christ, *vide Rev.* xxii. 17. and Christ is called her *Husband,* 2 *Cor.* xi. 2. because we by contracting ourselves to him in one and the same *Covenant,* do all become one *Party,* and are *incorporate* together into one *Spouse,* and *he* by contracting himself to us in one and the same *Counterpart,* unites us in one common *Husband,* and *endows* us in common with all his Spiritual *Goods* and *Blessings.* So that by the *New Covenant,* which is the *Nuptial Contract* between Christ and Christians, and in which we are said to be *married to Christ,* Rom. vii. 7. we are not only *united* to one *Head* and *Husband,* but are also *incorporated* into one *Body* and *Spouse.* And accordingly, as the *Jews,* by virtue of *their* Covenant with God, were *separated* from *all* Nations and *united* together into a *distinct* Body, upon which account they are called God's *peculiar Treasure, a Kingdom of Priests, and an holy Nation,* Exod. xix. 5, 6. so we *Christians,* by virtue of our Covenant with God in Christ, are *separated* from all other Societies, and made a *distinct* Corporation from the *World;* upon which account *we* are also called *a chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, and a holy Nation, and a peculiar People,* 1 Pet. ii. 9.

Thirdly, The Church or Kingdom of Christ is the Universal Society of all Christian People, incorporated by the new Covenant in *Baptism.* For so in *Humane* Contracts it hath been thought meet even by the *unanimous* Consent of all prudent Law-givers, that the *mutual* Engagements of the *contracting* Parties should not be legally *Pleadable,* till they have been first mutually *sealed,* and solemnly *confirmed* before *Witness.* And accordingly God, who is wont to proceed with Men in *Humane* Methods, hath always thought meet to *strike* and *ratify* his Covenants with them, by some visible *Sign,* or *Solemnity.* For thus he struck his Covenant with the *Jews* in that *visible* Solemnity of *Circumcision,* which was the *Sign* by which God and that People *sealed* and *consigned* to each other their *respective* Parts of that Covenant, by which he stipulated to be *their* God, and *they* to be his People. And till such time as this *outward* Sign was *transacted* between God and them, the Covenant it *sealed* was not in *force* so as to oblige *either* Party, or give them a *mutual* Claim in one another. And hence it is called God's *Covenant in their Flesh, for an everlasting Covenant,* and they who refused to admit *this* Sign, unless it were under some great *Necessity* (in which Case God accepted the sincere *Desire* for the *Deed)* were *to be cut off from that People,* i. e. to be treated as *Aliens* from that Church, and that because they had *broken* or *rejected God's Covenant, i. e.* by *refusing* that *Sign* which was the *Seal* and *Ratification* of it, *Gen.* xvii. 13, 14.

But this *Bloody* Sign, as was shewn before, being not so *commodious* for the State of the *Christian* Church, which was to be diffused over all the *World,* our Saviour *abolished* it; and in its room *introduced* the Sign of *Baptism,* which was before *used* by the *Jews* for the *initiation* of their *Females* and *Proselytes;* and which was much more *acceptable* to the *Gentiles,* as not being at all *offensive* to them (as *Circumcision* was) it being one of their *own* Religious *Ceremonies,* and much less *painful* in its own Nature. But, though this was of a quite *different* Nature from *Circumcision,* yet it was instituted by our Saviour to *supply* its *room,* and to *serve* its Religious *Ends* and *Purposes,*

viz. to *transact*, and *seal*, and *ratify* the *New Covenant* between God and us: For in Baptism the Party *baptized* makes a solemn *Vow* and *Profession*, by *himself* or his *Sponsor*, of *Fidelity* and *Allegiance* to God through Jesus Christ; and hence Baptism is called the Answer or Promise *of a good Conscience*, 1 Pet. iii. 21. For in the Apostolick Age, as *Origen* tells us, *in Num. Homil.* 5. there were certain *Questions* proposed by the *Minister* to the Person to be *baptized*, which St. *Cyprian* calls *Interrogatio Baptismi, the Interrogation of Baptism:* Now the Questions proposed were first, Ἀποτάσσῃ τῷ Σατανᾷ, *Wilt thou renounce the Devil?* To which the Party answered, Ἀποτάσσομαι, *I do renounce:* Then he was asked again, Συντάσσῃ τῷ Χριστῷ, *Dost thou consent to resign thyself to Christ?* To which he answered, Συντάσσομαι, *I do consent*; and this *Answer* or *Promise* being made with a sincere Intention, was that in all Probability which the Apostle here calls *the Answer of a good Conscience:* and if so, it is certain that these Words do imply our *formal Covenanting* with God in *Baptism.* Of the Truth of which we have a large Account in *Rom.* vi. 3, 4, 5. *Know ye not that so many as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his Death: therefore we are buried with him by Baptism into Death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the Glory of the Father; even so we also should walk in newness of Life: for if we have been planted together into the likeness of his Death, we shall be also into the likeness of his Resurrection*; where it is plain that those Phrases, *buried with Christ*, and *risen with Christ*, are only the *Sense* and *Signification* of that *Eastern* Custom in Baptism, *viz.* of *plunging* the baptized Person under Water, and *raising* him up again; which being *Sacramental* Actions, must be supposed to have a peculiar *import* and *significancy*; and the significancy of them, the Apostle here plainly tells us, wholly refers to the *Death*, and *Burial*, and *Resurrection* of Christ: And therefore the *plunging* under Water must necessarily refer to Christ's *Death* and *Burial*, and the *raising* up again, to his *Resurrection.* The true *import* therefore of these *Baptismal* Actions must be, *First*, a *solemn* Profession of our *Belief*, that as we are *buried* under Water and *raised* up again, so Christ *died*, and was *buried*, and *raised* up from the Dead, which being the *principal* Articles of Christianity, do include all the rest. *Secondly*, They also import a solemn *Engagement* of the Party *baptized* to *die to*, and endeavour utterly to extinguish all his *sinful* Lusts and Affections, even as Christ *died* and was *buried*; and to rise from the *Spiritual* Death of *Sin* into *newness* of *Life*, even as Christ *rose* from his *natural* Death to live for ever. Since therefore in their Baptism they did by the same Actions signify their *Belief* of the *Death*, and *Burial*, and *Resurrection* of Christ, together with their own *Resolution* of *dying* to *Sin*, and *rising* to *Righteousness*, they might very well be said to *die with Christ* in those Actions, to be *buried with Christ*, and to *rise with Christ*, since what is *represented* as done together, is representatively done together; and it is usual in Sacraments to call the representing *Signs* by the Names of the *Things* which they represent. For so the *Paschal Lamb* is called the *Passover*, and the *Bread* and *Wine* in the Lord's Supper the *Body* and *Blood* of Christ; and for the same reason the *plunging* under Water and *raising* up again in Baptism is here called *dying with Christ*, and *rising with Christ*, because in the *same* Actions Christ's *natural* Death and Resurrection, and our *spiritual* Death and Resurrection are *represented* together. The meaning therefore of the abovecited Passage is plainly this, "You cannot "be ignorant that when you were baptized into Jesus Christ, you made a so-"lemn Profession, that you would conform yourselves to his Death, in dy-"ing to Sin even as he died for it, so that in your Baptismal Immersion you "were representatively buried with him, that so as Christ was raised from "the Dead, so you, in conformity thereto, might live a new regenerate "Life; for if we conform to his Death in dying to Sin, as we promised to do "in our Immersion, we shall be sure to conform to his Resurrection also, in "living to Righteousness, as we promised to do in the rising out of the Wa-"ter again. By which it is evident that Baptism is on our Part a solemn

Engagement

Engagement of ourselves to perform the *Conditions* of the New Covenant. And indeed the very Phrase, *Baptized into Jesus Christ*, can import no less than a solemn *resignation* of ourselves to *Christ* in Baptism. For so the Phrase, *Baptized into Moses*, 1 Cor. x. 2. plainly denotes the *Jews giving up* themselves to him, to be *governed* by him, as the *Minister* of God. And accordingly the Apostle tells us, that *so many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ*, Gal. iii. 27. and *putting on Christ* is opposed by the Apostle to *making no provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lusts thereof*, Rom. xiii. 14. and therefore must necessarily denote an *Engagement* of ourselves, to a *strict* observance of the *Laws* of Christian *Purity*; or, which is the same thing, a *Promise* or *Stipulation* on *our* Part, of *universal* Obedience to *his* Laws. By all which it is evident, that in this Solemnity of Baptism we put ourselves *under* Christ, as our *Head*, and *Covenant* with him to be ruled by him in our *Faith* and *Manners*.

And as in this Ceremony of Initiation *we* strike Covenant with *him*, so doth he with *us*. For in this sacred Action the *Minister* is the *authorized Proxy* of Jesus Christ, and therefore his giving the holy *Sign* is Christ's *own* Action, and doth to all Intents and Purposes as much oblige him, as if he did it in his own Person. For since Christ is not upon *Earth*, and so cannot *transact* the New Covenant with us in his own Person, it is necessary he should do it by Authorized Proxies, *impowered* by himself to do it in *his Name*; which Proxies being thus Authorized by him, do as *effectually* oblige *him* by those *federal* Rites which they perform in *his* Name, as if he *himself* had performed them in his own *Person*. For *he* doth what *they* do by *his* Authority, and is as *effectually* obliged by what he doth by them *mediately*, as by what he doth by by himself *immediately*. For thus his Commission runs, by which he Authorized them and their *Successors* to the End of the World, *Go teach all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*; where that Phrase, *in the Name*, plainly imports (as it generally doth in other Places of Scripture) *by the Authority*. So that by this Commission, Christ's Ministers are *authorized* and *constituted* the *legal* Proxies of the *Holy Trinity*, in the *stead* of those blessed Persons to *seal* the *New Covenant* with the *Baptismal Sign* to those whom they Baptize, and thereby *legally* to *oblige* the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* to perform the *Promises* of it to all those Baptized Persons who perform the *Conditions* of it. For that the Baptismal Sign is a *legal* Engagement upon *God* as well as *us* to perform the New Covenant, is evident from *Mark* xvi. 16. *He that believes and is baptized shall be saved*; where it is evident, that *Baptism* as well as *Faith* doth confer a *right* to Salvation; and therefore since *Faith* confers it only as it is the *Condition* of the Covenant, *Baptism* must confer it as it is the *Seal* of the Covenant. And accordingly St. *Peter* exhorts his Converts *to Repent and be Baptized for the Remission of Sins, and ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost*. From whence it is evident, that *Baptism*, as well as *Repentance*, has a great influence on our *Remission of Sins*, and our *communication* of the *Holy Ghost*. Since therefore *Faith* and *Repentance* are the *whole* Condition of the *Promise* of Remission, and of the Holy Ghost, it necessarily follows, that *Baptism* doth not influence it, as it is the *Condition*, but as it is the *Seal* of the *Promise*. And so also in Baptism we are said to *wash away our Sins*, *i. e.* the *guilt* of them, *Acts* xxii. 16. because the Sign of Baptism *seals* to us on God's Part the *Promise* of *Forgiveness*. By all which it is evident, that Baptism is a *federal Rite* in which *God* and *we* do *seal* and *ratify* to one another each other's *part* of the New Covenant; and it is this *sealing* that makes the Covenant *obliging* to *both* Parties, and gives to each a Legal *Claim* and *Title* to each other's *Promise* and *Engagement*: To *God* it gives a Legal Title to all that *Duty* which *we* promise, and to *us* it gives a Legal Title to all those *Blessings* which *God* promises. So that till such Time as we are *Baptized*, the *New Covenant* is not struck between *God* and *us*, nor have we any *Right* or *Title* to any of the Blessings *promised* in it. And, though we should *perform* all that *Duty* which the Covenant *requires*, yet this will

 not

not at all *intitle* us to the *Blessings* it promises. For he who engages to walk a *Mile* for me, upon my *promise* to give him a *Thousand Pounds*, hath, upon his *performance*, a just *Claim* and *Title* to the *whole* Sum; whereas he that walks *Ten* Miles for me *without* any such Promise, hath a *Right* to no *more* than what in *strict* Justice he *deserves*. And therefore since what God *promises* in the New Covenant infinitely *exceeds* the *merit* of what he *requires*, our *Performance* of what he requires, doth not at all *oblige* him to *bestow* the *Blessings* of his Promise on us, unless we perform it upon a *Covenant-Engagement*; and therefore till this Engagement is *made* and *sealed* in our *Baptism*, we can have no *Promise* to rely upon; and though we should never so heartily endeavour to *repent*, we cannot *Claim* the Divine *Grace* and *Assistance*, and though we should *actually* Repent, we can plead no *Title* to *Remission* of *Sins*, and though we should *persevere* in *well-doing* to the end, we cannot *challenge* Eternal Life. And since our Endeavours do not *merit* God's *Grace*, nor our Repentance his *Pardon*, nor our Perseverance *Eternal Life*, he is no more *obliged* to bestow these Blessings on us by his *Justice*, than he is by his *Promise*. So that in *this* State all we have to rely upon, is the *hope* of an extraordinary Mercy; that God will do for us that which he never *promised*, and *bestow* upon us that which he is not *obliged* to. But when once we have struck *Covenant* with him in *Baptism*, we have him fast *obliged* to us, to perform *his* Part of the Covenant, whenever *we* perform *ours*; and our being thus *tied* together as *one* Party in *one* and the *same* Covenant by this *federal* Rite of *Baptism*, is that which makes us *one Catholick* Church or Community. For our admission into this *New Covenant*, which is the Church's *Charter*, is our admission into the *Church* itself; and it is by being *intituled* to all the *Blessings* that belong to Christians *in common*, by virtue of the *New Covenant*, that we become *Members* of the Christian *Community*. And hence we are said to be *Baptized into the Body* or Church of Christ, 1 *Cor.* xii. 13. because Baptism, which is our admission into the Christian *Covenant*, is only in other Words our admission into the Christian *Church*, which is nothing but the *Body* of Christian People *joined* and *confederated* by the *New Covenant*.

Fourthly, The Church or Kingdom of Christ is one universal Society of all Christian People incorporated by the New Covenant in Baptism, *under Jesus Christ its supreme head*. And it is this also that makes all Christian People one *Body* and *Society*, because they are all united under one and the same supreme *Head* and *Governour*. For *several* neighbouring Congregations are called in Scripture *one* Church, as I shall shew hereafter, because they were all under the Government of *one* and the *same* Bishop: So all the Churches under all the Bishops in the World, are in Scripture called *one* Church, because they are all under *one* Governor, even *Jesus Christ* the *supreme* Bishop of our Souls: And accordingly the Apostle tells us, that as there is but *one Body*, *i. e.* one Church, so there is but *one Lord* or supreme Governor of that Church, *Eph.* iv. 4, 5. and in *Col.* i. 18. he tells us, that Christ *is the head of this Body the Church*; and again, *Eph.* v. 23. that *the Husband is the head of the Wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church*. For Christ being Mediator of the *Covenant*, by which we are *incorporated* into a Religious Society, it must be under *him*, as our immediate Head and Governor, that we are incorporate by it; because as he is Mediator of it for God, his *Office* is to govern us *for* and *under* God, according to the Terms and Conditions of it.

Fifthly, The Church or Kingdom of Christ is *one Universal Society* of all Christian People [distributed into particular Churches] which distribution is made for the *convenience* of Divine Worship: For the Catholick Church being a vast Body composed of *infinite Parts* which are separated from each other by vast distances of Place, it is impossible for it to celebrate the Offices of Divine Worship in any *one Assembly* or *Congregation*. At first, indeed, the *whole Catholick Church* was only a *single Congregation*; but this in a little Time encreased and multiplied so fast, that they could no longer exercise the Publick

lick Worſhip of God together in *one Place* or *Aſſembly*; and therefore the firſt diſtribution of it was into ſeveral Congregations, which in Scripture are called by the Name of *Churches*, as being ſimilar Parts of the Catholick Church, even as *every breath* of Air is called *Air*, and *every drop* of Water, *Water*. For thus thoſe Believers who were wont to Aſſemble in any *one particular* Houſe to Worſhip God together, are frequently called *Churches*; as for Inſtances, *the Church in the Houſe of* Priſcilla *and* Acquila, *Rom.* xvi. 5. *The Church in the Houſe of* Nymphas, 1 *Cor.* xvi. 19. *The Church in the Houſe of* Philemon, *Col.* iv. 15. In which Houſes in all probability there was an *upper Room* conſecrated and ſet apart, according to the Cuſtom of the *Jews*, for Divine Worſhip; in which *upper Rooms*, not only the Believers of the *Family*, but ſeveral other *neighbouring* Chriſtians were wont to aſſemble for the Publick Exerciſe of Divine Worſhip. And ſo where-ever the Scripture ſpeaks of ſeveral Churches in the ſame Countrey; as for Inſtances, *the Churches of* Judea, *Gal.* i. 22. *of* Samaria *and* Galilee, *Acts* ix. 31. it is evident, that by theſe Churches no more is meant but only the *ſeveral Congregations* of Believers in thoſe ſeveral *Churches*.

But theſe Congregations growing numerous, there was a *ſecond diſtribution* made of them, by which many of thoſe *Congregations neighbouring* upon one another, were collected into *one Body*, under *one Head* or *Biſhop*, who was the *common Guide* and *Paſtor* of all the Members, whether Lay or Clergy, appertaining to them. And theſe Collections of ſeveral Congregations under their ſeveral Biſhops or Governours, are in Scripture alſo frequently called *Churches*; for thus for Inſtance, the Church of *Corinth* contained in it ſeveral *Congregations*, and therefore, though in the Dedication of his Epiſtle, the Apoſtle calls it, *the Church of God*, in the ſingular Number, *which is at Corinth*, 1 Cor. i. 2. yet in the Epiſtle he enjoins, that *the Women ſhould keep ſilence in the Churches*, 1 Cor. xiv. 34. which is a plain Evidence, that in that Church there were ſeveral *Churches* or *Congregations*: And ſo alſo we read of the *Churches* of *Aſia* and *Syria*, *Cilicia* and *Macedonia*; all which were large Countries, and did without doubt contain in them *ſeveral Congregations* of Chriſtians; and thus alſo we read of the *Church* of *Jeruſalem*, in the ſingular Number, and ſo of *Antioch*, *Epheſus*, &c. which Churches doubtleſs conſiſted of *ſeveral Congregations* in and about thoſe populous Cities; which were all united into *one Body*, under the Care and Inſpection of *one Biſhop* or *Governour*.

Now as the *firſt diſtribution* of the Catholick Church into diſtinct Congregations, was made for the *convenience of Worſhip*, it being impoſſible for the whole Church, when it began to increaſe and enlarge itſelf, to celebrate the Divine Offices by the Miniſtry of one and the ſame Paſtor; ſo this *ſecond diſtribution* of it into particular Churches, conſiſting of ſeveral Congregations, was made for the *convenience of Government* and *Diſcipline*; it being impoſſible for the whole Church to maintain its Order, Government and Diſcipline, under the ſingle inſpection of any *one Biſhop* or *Governour*: But yet, notwithſtanding theſe Diſtributions, the Church's *Unity* ſtill remains; for as the Empire was but *one*, notwithſtanding that, for the convenience of Society and Government, it was diſtributed into ſeveral Cities and Regions, and thoſe into ſeveral Provinces, becauſe they were all incorporated together *under one Civil Head*, the Emperour; ſo the Church is but *one*, though for the convenience of *Worſhip* and *Government* it be diſtributed into ſeveral Congregations, and thoſe into ſeveral particular Churches or Epiſcopacies; becauſe they are all incorporate under *one ſpiritual Head*, even Jeſus Chriſt the ſupereme Biſhop and Paſtor of our Souls.

Sixthly, It is the *Univerſal Society* of all Chriſtian People, diſtributed into particular Churches, under *Lawful* Governours and Paſtors, and it is this, indeed, that conſtitutes them *diſtinct* Churches, *viz.* their being *joined* and *united* together under diſtinct Paſtors and Governours: For thus a *ſingle* Congregation is a *diſtinct* Church, becauſe all the Members of it do locally *Communicate* together in all the Offices of Divine Worſhip adminiſtred to them by

a *distinct Pastor*: and so also a Collection of several Congregations is a *distinct Church*, because they all participate together of the direction and conduct of a *distinct Governour*. For, as I shewed before, the reason of these Distributions of the Catholick Church first into single Congregations, was the *Convenience of Worship*, and then into several Collections of several Congregations was the *Convenience of Government*; and therefore, since that which serves the convenience of *Worship*, is the having *distinct Pastors* to administer it; and that which serves the convenience of *Government*, is the having *distinct Rulers* to exercise it, it hence necessarily follows, that *that* which makes a Congregation a distinct *distribution* of the Catholick Church, must be its worshipping together under a *distinct Pastor*; and that which makes a Collection of Congregations a distinct distribution of the Catholick Church, must be its being united together under a distinct *Governour*; because without their *Pastor* or their *Governour* they want the formal reason of their being distributed into *distinct Churches*. And indeed there is no Church whatsoever, whether it be a single Congregation or a Collection of Congregations, can act as a Church without a *Pastor* or *Governour*. No Congregation can Lawfully communicate in the Publick Offices of *Divine Worship*, without a Lawful Pastor to administer it; no Collection of Congregations can Lawfully exert an Act of *Church-Government* without having an authorized *Governour* to exercise it. For the Administration of all Church-Offices is committed, by our Saviour, into the Hands of the Church-Officers; it is to them that he hath given *the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*, *i. e.* Authority to *admit*, or *exclude*, or *re-admit* Men into the Communion of the Church: It is they alone whom he hath made the Keepers of the *Seals* of the New Covenant, *viz. Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*, they alone whom he hath authorized to teach the Gospel, to *bless* the People, and to *offer* up the Publick Prayers of Christian Assemblies. And these are the *proper* Acts of a Church, consider'd *as a Church*; so that without *Pastors* or *Governours* there is no Church can perform any of those Acts that are *proper* to a Church: And therefore since all *Action* proceeds from the *Essence* of the *Agent*; *Pastors* and *Governours*, without which Churches, as such, cannot act, must necessarily be *essential* to Churches; and hence the Apostle tells us, that the great purpose for which Christ ordained Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, and Pastors, and Teachers was πρὸς καταρτισμὸν, *for the compacting or joining together the Saints* as one Body in Church Communion and Society, *Ephes.* iv. 11. 12. and hence also you find the Churches of *Asia* following the Number of the *Angels* or *Rulers* of them, *Rev.* i. 20. which plainly implies, that therefore they were Seven distinct *Churches*, because they had Seven distinct *Rulers* or *Bishops*; and therefore though the Ordination of Pastors and Bishops is not confined to the Ministry of any particular Church, but extends to the Ministry of the Church Catholick; for so St. *Paul, Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, all are yours, and you are Christ's*, that is, they are *all* Ministers of the Catholick Church *in common*, of which you are Members, and as such you have all a share in them, 1 *Cor.* iii. 22, 23. yet it is the particular Application of this their *general Capacity* to this or that *particular number* of Christians or Congregations of Christians that constitutes them *particular Churches*; and being first authorized Ministers of the Catholick Church they carry along with them into the particular Church they are sent to, all that *Church Authority* and *Power* by which it acts and operates *as a Church*. So that without *Pastors* or *Governours*, particular *Churches* are nothing to so many *Bodies* without *Souls*, to animate and act them; and therefore as in natural Bodies the *form* that acts them doth also constitute their *Kind* and *Species*, so in these Ecclesiastical *Bodies*, the *Pastors* and *Governours* that move and act them as Churches, do also constitute them *Churches*. What these *Lawful Pastors* and *Governours* are, I shall have occasion to discourse hereafter, when I come to treat of the *Ministers* of *Christ's Kingdom*; it being sufficient at present to shew the *necessity* of them to the constituting particular Churches.

Seventhly,

Seventhly, The Church is one *Universal Society* of *all* Christian People distributed into particular Churches [holding Communion with each other:] By holding Communion with each other, I mean, *owning* each other as Parts of the same Body, and *admitting* each others Member, as occasion serves, into *actual Communion* with them in all their Religious Offices. It is true, in the Primitive Churches there were sundry *prudential* Acts of Communion pass'd between them, such as their *formed* and *communicatory Letters*, by which the holy Bishops gave an account to each other of the *State* and *Condition* of their respective Churches, and consulted each other's *Judgment* about them; but these were not at all *essential* to that Communion which they were obliged, as true Churches, to maintain with one another. All the Communion which they are obliged to, as they are *similar Parts* and *distributions* of the Catholick Church, is, that they should not *divide* into separate Churches, so as to *exclude* each others Members from communicating in each others Worship, whenever they have occasion to travel from one Church to another. For so long as there is no *Rupture* between distant Churches, no declared *disowning* of each other, no express *refusal* of any Act of Communion to each others Members, they may be truly said to maintain all *necessary* Communion with each other. And that this Communion is *absolutely necessary* between all those particular Churches, into which the Catholick Church is distributed, will evidently appear from these Four Considerations. *First*, that by *Baptism*, as was shewed before, all Christian People are made *Members* of the Catholick Church, and by being made *Members* of it, they are all obliged to *communicate with* it; for how can they *act* as *Parts* of the whole, that hold no *Communication* with the whole? They who are Members of any Society have not only *Right* to communicate in all the common *Benefits* of it, but also an *Obligation* to communicate in all common *Offices* of it: And therefore since by Baptism we are made *Members* of the *Catholick Church* or *Society* of *Christians*, we are thereby not only entituled to partake with it in all its *Privileges*, but also obliged to *join* with it in all its *Offices*. But then *secondly*, it is farther to be considered, that the Catholick Church being all *distributed* into particular Churches, we can no otherwise communicate with it, than by communicating with some *particular Church*; for how can we communicate with the *whole*, that is all distributed into *Parts*, without communicating with some *Part* of the *whole*? And since the *whole* is nothing but only a *Collection* of *all* the *Parts*, what Communion can they hold with the *whole*, who hold no Communion with any *part* of it? So long therefore as there is any such thing as a *visible* Catholick Church upon Earth, we are obliged by our Baptism, unless *necessity* hinder us, to maintain a *visible Communion* with it: And so long as this Catholick Church is all distributed into so many *particular visible Churches*, we cannot visibly communicate with it, unless we communicate with some *one* of those *particular* Churches: For how can we be in Communion with the *whole* Body, when we are out of Communion with all the *Parts*, unless we can find a Body to communicate with, without all its Parts, or some Universal Church without all particular Churches. But then *Thirdly*, it is also to be considered, that as we cannot communicate with the *Universal* Church without communicating with some *particular* one, so neither do we communicate with the *Universal* Church by communicating with any *particular* one, unless that Particular one be in *Communion* with the Church Universal. For if I cannot communicate with the *whole* without being in Communion with some *part* of the *whole*, it is impossible I should communicate with the *whole*, unless I communicate with some *part* that is in *Communion* with the *whole*. It is as possible for a Finger to *communicate* with a Body by being joined to an Arm that is *separated* from the Body, as it is for a Christian to *communicate* with the Church Catholick by being *joined* to a Church that is *separate* from the Church Catholick. But then *Fourthly* and *lastly*, There is no particular

ticular Church can be *in Communion* with the Catholick, that *separates* itself from the Communion of any *particular* Church that is in Communion with the Catholick. For they who separate from *any part* of *any whole*, must necessarily separate from the *whole*, because the *whole* is nothing but *all the Parts* together; and it is a Contradiction to say, that they who are separated from any *one part*, are yet united to *all*. How then is it possible for *any* Church to separate itself from the Communion of *any other* Church, which is a *true part* of the Church Catholick, without separating itself from the Communion of the Church Catholick *itself*; since the Church Catholick is nothing but a *Collection* of *all true* Churches; and to be at the same time *united* to all true Churches, and separated from *one* true Church; is the same absurdity as to be *separated* from *all* true Churches, and yet *united* to *one*. In short, the Catholick Church is *one*, by the Communion of *all* its *Parts*, and therefore they who break Communion with *any one* part, must necessarily disunite themselves from the *whole*: For when Two Churches separate from one another, it must be, either because the one *requires* such *Terms* of *Communion* as are *not Catholick*, or because the other *refuses* such as *are*. Now that Church which requires *sinful* or *uncatholick Terms* of *Communion*, doth thereby exclude not only *one* but *all* Parts of the Catholick Church from its Communion, because they are all equally obliged not to *communicate* with *any* Church upon *sinful* Terms of Communion, and that Church which *excludes* all Parts of the Catholick Church from its Communion, must in so doing *separate* itself from the Communion of the Catholick Church. And so on the other hand, that Church which *refuses* the Communion of any other Church upon *Lawful* and *Catholick Terms*, doth hereby *separate* itself from Communion of all Parts of the Church Catholick, because it separates from a part that *is* in *Communion* with all the *Parts* of it; for that Church which may be *Lawfully* communicated with, is in Communion with all other Churches that are in Communion with the Catholick Church; and therefore that Church which *separates* from its Communion cannot be in the number of those Churches that are *in Communion* with the Catholick Church; and how then can this separating Church be in the Communion of the Catholick Church, when it is *out* of the Communion of *any one* of those Churches of which the *Catholick Church consists*? All those particular Churches therefore into which the Catholick Church is *distributed*, must be in *Communion* with each other, otherwise they are so far from being *distributions* of the Catholick Church, that they are only so many *Schisms* and *Divisions* from it. For, if every Christian is *obliged* by his Baptism to *Communicate* with the Catholick Church; and if he can no *otherwise* Communicate with it than by Communicating with some *particular* Church, which is in Communion with the Church Catholick; and *lastly*, if no particular Church can be in Communion with the Church Catholick, which is not in Communion with *all* the *Churches* of which the Church Catholick *consists*; then it is absolutely necessary that all those Churches into which the Church Catholick is distributed, should maintain a *Catholick Communion* with one another.

Eighthly and *lastly*, The *Communion* which these particular Churches, into which the Catholick Society of Christians is distributed, *hold* with each other is *Threefold*: 1. In *all* the *Essentials* of Christian *Faith*: 2. In *all* the *Essentials* of Christian *Worship*: 3. In *all* the *Essentials* of Christian *Discipline*.

I. In all the *Essentials* of Christian *Faith*: By the *Essentials* of Christian *Faith*, I mean those *Doctrines*, the Belief of which is necessary to the *very Being* of Christianity; for, as in all *Arts* and *Sciences* there are some *first Principles* upon which the *whole Scheme* of their Doctrines depends, and the *denial* of which, like the removing the *Foundations* of a Building, *dissolves* and *ruins* the whole *Structure*; so in Christianity there are some *Principles* so *Fundamental* to it, as that the *removal* of them *shakes* the whole Scheme of it in pieces. Now the great Fundamental, as the Apostle tells us, is Jesus Christ: *For other Foundation can no Man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ*, 1 Cor. iii. 11.

ſo that by *removing* the belief of *Jeſus Chriſt* from the Chriſtian Religion, we *neceſſarily* ſink and diſſolve the whole Structure; and accordingly the Apoſtle pronounces thoſe Men *Apoſtates* from *Chriſtianity*, who *hold not the Head*, which is Jeſus Chriſt, *Col.* ii. 19. But yet the bare *belief* of *Jeſus Chriſt*, or of this Propoſition, that *Chriſt came from God*, and *was his Meſſias and Anointed*, is not all that is *eſſential* to the Chriſtian *Faith*, which includes not only his *Miſſion* from God, but alſo the *end* of his *Miſſion*, *viz.* to be a *Mediator* between God and Man. For *Chriſtianity*, as it is diſtinguiſhed from *Natural Religion*, is nothing but the Religion of the *Mediator*, as conſiſting wholly of the Doctrine of the *Mediator*, together with the Duties thence ariſing; ſo that whatſoever Propoſition the *Mediatorſhip* of Chriſt neceſſarily and immediately implies, it is a *fundamental* Article of the Chriſtian *Faith*, which no Man can deny, without *innovating* the whole Religion, and turning it into a quite *different* Doctrine from *true* and *real Chriſtianity*. For this Propoſition, that *Chriſt came from God to mediate between God and Man*, includes the whole Doctrine of the Goſpel: And therefore whatſoever Propoſition is either ſo *neceſſarily included* in it, or ſo *inſeparably conjoined* with it, as that the *denial* of it doth by neceſſary and immediate conſequence *overthrow* the *Mediation* of our Saviour, it muſt be *eſſential* to the Chriſtian Faith; and the more *neceſſary* Connexion there is between any particular Doctrine, and this *all-comprehending* Doctrine of the Mediation, the more neceſſary and eſſential it is to the Chriſtian *Faith*.

Now whoſoever believes not, or at leaſt denies any *eſſential part* of the Chriſtian Faith, is not a Chriſtian; and that not only becauſe he wants a Part of that Faith which *denominates* Men Chriſtians, but alſo becauſe by diſbelieving that Part, he doth by neceſſary conſequence *overthrow* the whole of Chriſtianity; for ſo *Tertul. de Præſcr. c.* 37. expreſly aſſerts, *Si Hæretici ſunt, Chriſtiani eſſe non poſſunt, i. e.* They who are Hereticks, cannot be Chriſtians; and hence it is that *Hereticks*, who are ſuch as obſtinately deny any *fundamental* Article of Chriſtianity, are in Scripture ranked in the ſame Claſs with *Heathens* and *Infidels*; for all true Chriſtians are required to *ſhun* and *avoid* them as *unclean Perſons*, the very touch of whoſe Converſation was enough to defile them, *Rom.* xvi. 17. and the Governours of the Church are required to *anathematize* or exclude them from all Chriſtian Communion, *Gal.* i. 8. to *reject them*, Tit. iii. 10. and *withdraw themſelves from them*, 1 *Tim.* vi. 5. that is, to treat them as *Heathens* and *Infidels*, who have no Right or Title to Chriſtian Communion; and if *Heretical Perſons* are to be thus treated, then much more are *Heretical Churches*; and if every *ſingle Heretick* be *condemned of himſelf*, as the Apoſtle affirms, *Tit.* iii. 11. *i. e.* Excommunicated by his own Sentence of Doctrine, whereby he *voluntarily* departs from the Church, and ſo cuts off himſelf from its Communion, then certainly ſo is every *Heretical Community*; and therefore, as ſuch, muſt be utterly unqualified for Chriſtian Communion. And if Hereſy excommunicates not only *Heretical Perſons*, but *Heretical Societies*, then a common *Agreement* in all the *Eſſentials* of Chriſtian Faith, which is the oppoſite of *Hereſy*, is neceſſarily included in *Catholick Communion*; and accordingly the Scripture frequently preſſes all Chriſtian People to this common *Agreement*, as to a moſt *eſſential* Part of their Communion with each other: For ſo they are required *to mind* or *think one and the ſame thing*, Phil. ii. 2. *to ſtand faſt in one Spirit with one Mind.* 2 Cor. xiii. 11. to *walk by the ſame Rule, and think the ſame Thing*, Phil. i. 27. to *be joyned together in the ſame Mind, and in the ſame Judgment*, 1 Cor. i. 10. to *hold faſt the form of ſound Words*, 2 Tim. i. 13. to *ſtrive together for the Faith of the Goſpel*, Phil. i. 27. and to *keep that which is committed to us*, 1 Tim. vi. 20. which is *that one Form of Doctrine which was delivered to us*, Rom. vi. 17. The meaning of all which is, not to oblige us to be of *one Mind* and *Judgment* in *all* Points of Religion; for that is no more in our Power than it is to be all of one *Stature* or *Complexion*; but that we ſhould all unanimouſly *conſent* in all thoſe fundamental Articles of which

that *one Faith consists*, which is the *common Creed* of Christians: So that it is not the differing of one Church from another in *Doctrines* that are either *remote* from or *near* the Foundations of Christianity, that *dissolves* their Communion in the Christian Faith; but so long as the *essential* Doctrines of the Gospel are secured on both sides, no *corrupt Doctrines* on either can warrant a *breach* of Communion between them. It is true, if the erring Church imposes the belief of its *Errors* as a *Condition* of its Communion, no Church or Christian, that believes them to be Errors, can *lawfully* communicate with it, be those Errors never so small or inconsiderable; not that in themselves they are a *sufficient* Cause of *separation*, but because they who do not believe them cannot profess they do, without telling a *Lye*, which is a Condition that is *simply unlawful:* And so also when the Errors are such as do corrupt the *vital* and *essential* Parts of her Worship, so that there is no communicating with her in her *Worship* without communicating in her *Corruptions*; all Churches and Christians are obliged to *abstain* from its Communion; not because of the Errors simply considered in *themselves*, but because they *profane* and *desecrate* her Worship with those sinful *intermixtures* they infuse into it; so that we cannot join with her in her *Worship*, without joining with her in her *Sin:* So that there is *no Error* can *separate* any Church or Christian from the Catholick Communion of Faith, but only *Heresy*, which is a *perverse* renunciation of some *essential* Part or *fundamental* Article of that Faith.

Secondly, The *Communion*, which the particular Churches, of which the Catholick Church consists, hold with each other, is in *all* the *Essentials* also of Christian *Worship*. By the *Essentials* of Christian *Worship*, I mean the *Invocation* of the one Eternal God, through the one Mediator Jesus Christ, and the Participation of the Two *Sacraments* of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Hence the Apostle tells us, that as there is but *one* common *Faith* wherein all true Christians communicate with each other, so there is but *one Lord*, *Eph.* iv. 4. and but *one God* for us to address to, and *one Mediator between God and Man* for us to address by, 1 *Tim.* ii. 5. and therefore to address *to* this *one God* by this *one Mediator*, is an essential Part of Christian *Worship*. And the same Apostle tells us, that there is but *one Baptism*, Ephes. iv. 4. and but *one Bread of which we are Partakers*, 1 *Cor.* x. 17. and therefore to participate of these *Sacraments* must also be *essential* to Christian Worship: So that all those particular Churches that admit each others Members upon *lawful Terms* to communicate with them in worshipping this *one God*, through this *one Mediator*, and in this *one Baptism*, and *one* Eucharistical *Bread* and *Cup*, are so far in *Communion* with the Church Catholick. For in *these* Acts of Christian Worship consists the principal Part of Christian Communion; and therefore that Church which *refuses* either to admit other Churches to communicate with her in these Acts of Worship, or to communicate with them in them upon *lawful* Terms, doth so far *separate itself* from the Christian Communion. I say, upon lawful Terms, because if it either *require* unlawful, or *refuse* lawful ones, it utterly excludes all other Churches from its Communion. If on the other hand it hath *sophisticated* its *Worship* with any unlawful *Intermixtures*, so that there is no participating with her in the *one*, without partaking with her in the *other*; if we cannot pray with her *to* the *one* God, *by* the *one* Mediator, without praying *to Creatures* too, or praying by other *Mediators* also; if we cannot partake with her in her *Baptism*, without partaking with her in some *sinful* and *impure Rites* of Baptism; in a Word, if we cannot be admitted to receive the *Lord's Supper* with her, without receiving it by *halves*, or being obliged to pay Divine *homage* to its *Elements*; in this case, I say, all Christians and Christian Churches are utterly *excluded* by her from communicating with her in the *Essentials* of Christian *Worship*. And so on the other hand, if a Church *forbids* its Members to *Communicate* upon occasion with any *other* Church in these Acts of Christian Worship, upon *lawful* Terms, in so doing it divides *itself* from the Communion of the Church Catholick; and though that

that Church it refuses to communicate with, should, through the *neglect* of its *Discipline*, have a great many *bad* Men as well as *good* in it; though it should require the observation of a great many *indifferent* Rites, Customs, and Ceremonies, yea, and of *contrary* Rites and Customs to its own; yet so long as the *Essentials* of its Worship are kept *pure* and *entire*, and are not so blended with unlawful *intermixtures*, but that we may *safely* partake of them, without being at all obliged to partake of any *Sin*; in this case, I say, to *refuse* to communicate with it, is to *separate* from the Communion of the Catholick Church: For, for the *same* Reason that any Church *refuses* to communicate with *this* Church, it must refuse to communicate with *all* other Churches in the World, because we cannot to this Day, nor ever could, communicate with any Church in the World in which there was not *some defect* of Discipline, *some intermixture* of bad Men with good, and *some indifferent* Modes and Ceremonies of Worship

Thirdly and *lastly*, Another Thing wherein those particular Churches, into which the Catholick Church is distributed, do communicate with each other, is, in the *Essentials* of Christian *Regiment* and *Discipline*: For, though the particular *Modes* and *Circumstances* of Christian Government and Discipline are not *determined* by Divine Institution, but left, for the most part, *free* to the prudent ordering and disposal of the Governours of particular Churches; yet there is a *standing Form* of *Government* and *Discipline* in the Church, *instituted* by our Saviour *himself*, which, as I shall shew hereafter, is this, that there should be an *Episcopacy*, or Order of Men, authorized in a continued *Succession* from the Apostles (who were authorized by himself) to *oversee* and *govern* all those particular Churches into which the Church Catholick should be hereafter distributed; to *ordain* inferior Ministers to teach, and instruct, and administer the holy Offices to particular Congregations; and having ordained them, to *guide* and *direct* them in the discharge of their Functions; to *prescribe* the particular Rules of outward Order and Decency to the People of the respective Churches committed to their Charge; to *confirm* the weak, and *admonish* the disorderly; and to *correct* the obstinate, by excluding them from the Communion of the Church of Christ. These Things therefore being all of *Divine Institution*, are the *Essentials* of Christian *Government* and *Discipline*, in which all Christian Churches are *obliged* to communicate with each other. And this being the *standing Government* and *Discipline* of the Catholick Church, no particular Church or Community of Christians can *refuse to communicate in it*, without dividing itself from the Communion of the Church Catholick; I say, *refuse to communicate in it*, because it is possible for a Church to be without this Government and Discipline, which yet doth neither *refuse* it, nor the Communion of any other Church for the sake of it. A Church may be debarred of it by unavoidable *necessities* in despite of its power, and against its consent; and under this circumstance I can by no means think such a Church to be *separated* from the Church Catholick; it is, indeed, an *imperfect* and *defective* Part of the Catholick Church; and, if this *defect* of it be any way owing to its own *negligence*, it is a very great *fault* in it, as well as an *unhappiness*. But though this instituted Government is necessary to the *perfection* of a Church, yet it doth not therefore follow, that it is necessary to the *being* of it. For even in the Jewish Church, wherein all Things were *determined* by *Divine Institution*, even to the *minutest* Circumstances, there were sundry notorious *deviations* from that Institution, which yet did not *unchurch* them. It was a great *deviation* in them to offer Sacrifice in their High Places, after God had *determined* them to Sacrifice *only* at the *Temple* of *Jerusalem*: It was another great *deviation* in them, to make Priests out of *other Families*, after God had *determined* them to the Family of *Aaron*; and yet it is certain, that neither the one nor the other did *unchurch* them. And if these deviations from Divine Institution, which were the effects of their *negligence*, did not yet *unchurch them*, it is not to be imagined that such *deviations* from it as are the pure effects of *necessity* should *unchurch others*. For, though no *necessity* can dispense with the

Eternal Laws of Good and Evil, becauſe the obſervance of them depends wholly upon our *Wills*, and there is no ſuch neceſſity *can* happen to us, as can put them out of the power of a *willing* Mind; yet as for *poſitive Inſtitutions*, there are a thouſand *Neceſſities* may occur, any one of which may render them wholly *unpracticable*, and then no Man can be *obliged* to do that which is *impoſſible*: As for Inſtance, the whole Family of *Aaron* might have been extinct, and if it had, it is evident, that *poſitive Inſtitution*, by which God required the *Jews* to chuſe their Prieſts out of the Family of *Aaron*, muſt have been wholly *unpracticable*, and conſequently the *Obligation* of it muſt have for ever *expired*; and they muſt have been obliged, *notwithſtanding* that *poſitive Inſtitution*, either wholly to have dropt their Prieſthood, and with that their Publick Worſhip, (which was much *more neceſſary* to them, than that their Prieſts ſhould be all of ſuch a Family) or to have choſen their Prieſts out of *other* Families of the Tribe of *Levi*; and if in *this* Exigence they had done the *latter*, there is no doubt but that the Divine Providence which *created* the *neceſſity*, muſt thereby have deſignedly *diſpenſed* with its own *Inſtitution*, and ſo have left them free to make Prieſts out of other Families. And by the ſame Reaſon, whenever the Divine Providence doth by *unavoidable* neceſſity deprive any Church of its Epiſcopacy, it thereby, for the *preſent* at leaſt, and whilſt the neceſſity *continues*, *releaſes* it from the *obligation* of the Inſtitution of Epiſcopacy, and *allows* it to adminiſter its Government and Diſcipline by a *Parity* of Preſbyters. And therefore ſo long as it doth not *renounce* the Epiſcopacy, but ſtill continues in Community with *other* Churches that enjoy it, it ought to be look'd upon and communicated with, as a *true* Member (though a *maimed* one) of the Church Catholick: For the Catholick Church never *denied* her Communion to any Chriſtian, or Community of Chriſtians, upon any *unavoidable deviation* from *poſitive Inſtitution*. It was, without doubt, as great a *deviation* from *poſitive Inſtitution* for *Laymen* to *Baptize*, as for a *Parity* of Preſbyters to *Govern* or *Ordain*, &c. and yet in Caſes of *neceſſity* the Catholick Church always allowed the *Baptiſm* of *Lay-men*, as deeming Baptiſm in *itſelf* more neceſſary than the adminiſtration of Baptiſm by *Perſons* in *Holy Orders*: And therefore where ſuch Perſons could not be had, ſhe thought meet rather to admit, that *Lay-men* ſhould adminiſter it, than to ſuffer ſuch as were qualified for it to die *unbaptized*. And why may we not reaſonably ſuppoſe, that the Catholick Church will admit *Presbyters* to *Govern* and *Ordain*, where there are no *Biſhops* to be had; ſince it hath admitted *Lay-men* to *Baptize*, where there are neither Biſhops nor Preſbyters to be had? Since the *latter* is as great a *deflexion* from *poſitive Inſtitution* as the *former*: And if the Catholick Church may be *reaſonably* preſumed to allow it in ſuch *neceſſary* Caſes, we muſt acknowledge either that ſhe hath not *Authority* enough to *provide* againſt her own *neceſſities*, which ſuppoſes her to be very *defective*; or that her allowance is *ſufficient* to authorize ſuch Perſons to *Rule* or *Ordain*, as well as to *Baptize* in caſe of *neceſſity*, as are not authorized by *poſitive Inſtitution*.

But, though a Community of Chriſtians *may* be a *true* Part of the Catholick Church, and in Communion with it, though it hath *no* Epiſcopacy; yet it is a plain Caſe, that if it *rejects* the Epiſcopacy, and *ſeparates* from the Communion of it, it thereby wholly *divides itſelf* from the Communion of the Catholick Church. For whether Epiſcopacy *be* of Divine Inſtitution or *no*, this is matter of Fact granted on all Hands, that for Twelve Hundred Years at leaſt *all* thoſe Churches into which the Catholick Church hath been *diſtributed*, have been ſubject to the *Epiſcopal Government* and *Diſcipline*; and therefore they who now *ſeparate* themſelves from the *Epiſcopal Communion*, as ſuch, muſt in ſo doing *ſeparate* themſelves from the *Communion* of *all* Churches for Twelve Hundred Years together; and then either all thoſe Churches muſt be *out* of the *Communion* of the Catholick Church, and conſequently during all that Time there muſt be no ſuch Thing as a *viſible Catholick Church* upon Earth; or elſe thoſe Communities of Chriſtians which ſeparate from *all* thoſe Churches, muſt be *Schiſms* and *Separations* from the Catholick Church.

SECT. 2

SECT. X.

Concerning the Ministers *of the* Kingdom *of* Christ.

HAVING in the foregoing Section treated at large concerning the *Nature* and *Constitution of Christ's Kingdom*, I shall in the next Place shew who the *Ministers* are, by whom he *Rules* and *Governs* it. And these are all included under a fourfold Rank and Order.

First, The *first* and *supreme* Minister by which Christ rules his Kingdom is the *Holy Ghost*.

Secondly, The *Second* and *next* to him are the *Angels* of God.

Thirdly, The *Third* are *Princes* and *Civil Governours*.

Fourthly, The *last* are the *Bishops* and *Pastors* of the Church.

I. The *Supreme Minister* by which Christ rules his Kingdom is the *Holy Ghost*, or Third Person in the Holy Trinity, of whose *Person* and *Ministry* under our Saviour in his Kingdom, I have treated at large from *Page* 357, to 378.

II. Therefore the next Order of Ministers by which Christ rules his Kingdom, are the *Angels* of God, that is, the whole World of *Angels*, whether they be *good* or *bad*, Angels of *Light*, or Angels of *Darkness*. In the Prosecution of which Argument, I shall endeavour *First* to prove the Thing, *viz.*

That the Angels, both *good* and *bad*, are the *Ministers* of Christ in the Government of his Kingdom.

Secondly, To shew wherein their Ministry doth consist. *First*, That the Angels, both *good* and *bad*, are Christ's *Ministers* in his Kingdom: For as for the *good* Angels, they are *subjected* to Christ by the *Order* and *Appointment* of God himself; who is the *Father of Spirits*, and to whom they are inviolably obedient: And for the *bad*, they are *subjected* to him by just *Conquest*, *contrary* to their own Wills and Inclinations. Of each of which I shall endeavour to give some brief account.

First, The *good* Angels are *subjected* to Christ by the *Order* and *Appointment* of God to whom they are always inviolably obedient. It seems at least, very probable, that *before* our Saviour was exalted upon his Triumphant *Ascension* into Heaven to the Univetfal Empire of the World under God the Father, the *Angelical Powers* were *not all* of them *subjected* to his Mediatorial Royalty, but that *some* of them had their *distinct Regencies* and *Presidentships*, immediately under God the most High Father, over such and such Nations and Countries, as he in his *Grace* thought meet to allot them; for so it is evident the Septuagint thought, when in *Deut.* xxxii. 8. instead of *he*, (*i. e.* God) *set the bounds of the Nations according to the Number of the Children of Israel*, they render it, *He set the bounds of the Nations according to the Number of the Angels of God*; for as the ancient *Jews* distributed the *Gentile* World into Seventy-two *Nations*, so they also reckoned Seventy-two *Angels* that presided over them; and indeed, considering what follows, *ver.* 9. *For the Lord's Portion is his People, Jacob is the lot of his Inheritance*, it seems very probable that this *Translation* of the Septuagint was the true Sense of the *Original*, *viz.* That, whereas God distributed the *Gentile* World into so many *Nations* as there were *President-Angels* to be their *Guardians* and *Governours*, he reserved *Israel* to *himself*, as his *own Lot* and *Portion*, over which he intended to preside *immediately* in his *own* Person; and therefore, as a learned Writer of our own hath observed, it is not at all improbable, but that instead of בני ישראל i. e. *the Sons of Israel*, as it is now in our *Hebrew* Copies, the ancient reading whence the Septuagint translated might be בני אל i. e. *the Sons of God*, and that *El* might either be mistaken by the Transcribers for a final abbreviation of *Israel*, or changed into *Il*, which is the contraction of *Israel*, and if in the ancient

ancient *Hebrew* it was *the Sons of God*, it is no wonder that the Septuagint render'd it *the Angels of God*; the *Sons of God* being in Scripture a very common Appellation of *Angels*.

But whether this be so or not, it is evident, that when God threatned to withdraw his *Personal Presence* from *Israel*, upon their worshipping the Golden Calf, and to put them under the Conduct of an *Angel*, Exod. xxxiii. 2, 3. the meaning of it was, that he would no longer *preside* over them in his *own Person*, but *subject* them to the Government of a *President Angel*, and therefore *ver.* 20. he bids them *beware of* this Angel, *and obey his voice, and not provoke him*; for, saith he, *he will not pardon your Iniquities:* Which plainly shews, that this *Angel* was to have had a *ruling power* over them to *pardon* or *punish* them at his own Pleasure; so that that which God here *threatned* was that he would put them in the *same* condition with other *Gentile* Nations, who were *subjected* to the Government of *particular Guardian Angels*; and so change their *Theocracy* into *Angelocracy*. And so, as it is evident, *Moses* understood him, for *ver.* 15, 16. he thus prays, *If thy Presence go not with me, carry us not up hence, for wherein shall it be known here, that I and thy People have found Grace in thy sight, is it not that Thou goest with us, so shall we be separated, I and thy People from all the People that are on the Face of the Earth:* Where it is very plain, that that which *distinguished Israel* from all *other* Nations was this, that God himself in his own Person *immediately presided* over them; and that if this Distinction were taken away by *God's withdrawing* from them, and *subjecting* them to the Presidence of an *Angel*, they would be left in the *same* Condition with other *Gentile* Nations, who must therefore be supposed to be under the *immediate Conduct* of *President Angels*. And this is most evident of the Kingdom of *Persia*, and the Kingdom of *Greece* in particular, *Dan.* x. 13, 20. where there is mention made of Two *Angels* under the Character of *the Prince of Persia, and the Prince of Greece*, and also of a Third, *viz. Michael* who is styled *one of the chief Princes*, and *Michael your Prince*, verse 21. and elsewhere *the great Prince which standeth for the Children of thy People*, Dan. xii. 1. and upon what other account can we suppose them to be styled the *Prince's* of those Countries, but because they *presided* over them as their *Guardians* and *Governours?* It is true, as for the last of them, *viz. Michael*; he is supposed by very learned Expositors, to be no other than *God* the *Son*, who, as I have proved at large, was always the *Prince* and *Guardian* of *Israel*; but if he were not *God* the *Son*, but merely a created *Angel*, it is certain he was not the *President* or *Guardian* of *Israel:* Since, as was shewn before, they had no *other Guardian* but *God himself:* But, in all probability, he was the *Prince* of those *Angels* that ministred to *God* the *Son* in his *Guardianship* and *Government* of *Israel*; and consequently that *Angel* of his to whom he intended to *subject* them, when he threatned to *withdraw* his *Personal Conduct* from them; upon which account he might be called their *Prince*, because under Christ he had a *principal* share in the *Protection* and *Government* of them. Now these *Guardian Angels* seem to have been *Archangels*, or the *Princes* of the distinct *Orders* of Angels; for so *Michael* is not only styled an *Archangel*, Jude ix. but he is also said to have an *Army of Angels* under his Command and Conduct, and with them to have fought *with the Dragon* or Satan (who was also an Archangel) *and his Angels*, Rev. xii. 7. Now though *Michael* (supposing him to be a *created* Spirit) was not a *Guardian Angel*, yet the Prophecy of *Daniel*, by styling him *one of the chief Princes*, plainly assures us that he was an Angel of the *same rank* and *degree* with the *Princes* or Guardian Angels of *Persia* and *Greece*; from whence it follows, that those *Guardian Angels* were *Archangels*, as well as he, and consequently that they also had *their Angels* or *appropriate Armies* of Angels, under their Conduct and Command, in which Armies of theirs (whose *Ministry*, without doubt, they always used in the Administration of their respective *Guardianships*) there is no Question but there was an exact *Order* and *Regiment*, which cannot well be supposed, without

supposing

ſuppoſing them particular *Officers* ſubordinated to each other, under their reſpective *Princes* or *Arch-angels*; and this ſeems to be implied in that Diſtinction which the Apoſtle makes between theſe *Heavenly Spirits*, Coloſſ. i. 16. *Whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers*; where by *Thrones* he ſeems to mean the reſpective *Princes* or *Arch-angels* of the ſeveral Orders; by *Dominions* or Lordſhips, the *Reguli* or chief *Dignitaries* under the Arch-angels; by *Principalities*, their *Governours* of ſuch Provinces or Cities as were within their Guardianſhips; by *Powers*, their inferiour *Magiſtrates* or *Officers*.

Theſe *Arch-angels* therefore, who were the *Tutelar* or *Guardian* Angels of Countries, together with their reſpective *Cohorts* or *Armies* of *Angels*, ſeem not to have been ſubjected to the *Mediatorial Dominion* of our Saviour, till *after* his Aſcenſion into Heaven; at which Time, it ſeems, God totally *diſſolved* thoſe *Angelocracies*, or *Angelical Governments* of Countries and Nations, and ſubjected both them and the *Arch-angels* (together with their Armies of Angels) that governed them, to the *Mediatorial* Scepter of our Lord and Saviour; upon which he, who *before* was King *only* of the *Jews*, *vide* Page 427, 428. became *univerſal* Lord and Emperour of the *World*; for ſo, *Heb.* ii. 5, we are told, *That to the Angels God hath not put in ſubjection the World to come*, or future Age, as it is in the *Greek*: Where by the *future Age* it is evident he means the Time of the Goſpel; for this is the very Phraſe uſed by the Septuagint, to expreſs the State of Chriſtianity, *Iſaiah* ix. 6. where Chriſt is called Πατὴρ μέλλοντος αἰῶνος, *The Father of this future Age.* This Paſſage therefore of God's not ſubjecting the *future Age* to the Angels, plainly implies that he had ſubjected the *paſt Age* to them, by conſtituting them the Guardians of Nations; but that now in this *Age of the Goſpel* he hath wholly *diſſolved* that Oeconomy, by ſubjecting both the *Guardians* and the *Nations* they guarded, to the Dominion of our Lord and Saviour: So that *now* the whole World of *Angels* is in the *ſame ſubjection* to Jeſus Chriſt, as it ſeems *Michael* and his Angels were *before* Chriſt's Exaltation; that is, they are now no longer ſubject as *Deputy Governours* of Provinces and Nations, who as ſuch were impowered to do *good* or *hurt* to thoſe who were under their Government, according to their own *diſcretion*; but as the *immediate* Attendants of his Perſon to whom nothing is left arbitrary, but all they do is *determined* by the *ſovereign Will* of him who imploys them; for thus the Scripture declares, that upon his *Aſcenſion* into Heaven he was veſted with a *new Dominion* over the *Angelical World*; ſo we are told, 1 *Pet.* iii. 22. that it was upon his *going into Heaven, and ſitting down at the right hand of God*, that *Angels, and Authorities, and Powers were made ſubject unto him*; and in *Eph.* xx. 21. that God *raiſed him from the dead, and ſet him at his own right hand in Heavenly Places, far above all Principality, and Power, and Might, and Dominion*, *i. e.* above all Angels of what rank or quality ſoever, *and every name that is named, not only in this World, but alſo in that which is to come*; and accordingly, *Col.* ii. 10. he is ſaid to be *Head of all Principality and Power*, *i. e.* of all the Heavenly Hierarchy, as well as Earthly Dominions: Thus alſo the Apoſtle tells us, that upon his Aſcenſion into Heaven, God *hath given him a Name above every Name, that at the Name of Jeſus every knee ſhould bow*, *i. e.* that every Being ſhould acknowledge ſubjection, *either of Things in Heaven, or of Things on Earth, or Things under the Earth*; *i. e.* whether of Angels, or Men or Devils. And, as all theſe Angelical Powers are now *ſubjected* to Chriſt, ſo do they all of them *miniſter* under him in his Kingdom; for ſo *Heb.* i. 14. they are ſaid to be all of them *miniſtring Spirits, ſent forth to miniſter for them who ſhall be Heirs of Salvation*; and in ſo doing they muſt neceſſarily miniſter under him who is *the Captain of our Salvation*; and accordingly in *Rev.* v. 6. thoſe Seven Angels which in *Zech.* iv. 10. are ſaid to be *the Seven Eyes of the Lord which run to and fro the whole Earth*; and therefore ſtyled *the Watchers*, Dan, iv. 13. as being the chief Inſtruments of the Divine Providence, are called *the Seven Eyes of the Lamb*, by

by whose Ministry and Agency he inspects and governs his Kingdom, which plainly implies, that they now minister to the *Exalted Mediator*, in the same Capacity that they heretofore ministred to *God Almighty* himself.

2. And then, *Secondly*, as the *good* Angels are subject to Christ by the *ordination* and *appointment* of God, so the *bad* are subjected to him by *just* and *lawful Conquest*; for so the Scripture assures us, that our blessed Saviour *subdued* them to his Mediatorial Empire, by pure dint of just *force* and *violence*: For so we find in his *Life-time* he frequently *contested* with these evil Spirits, and, in despite of *all* their power and malice, continually *vanquished* and *repelled* them. Thus in his *Temptation* in the Wilderness with only that powerful Command, *Get thee hence, Satan*, he put the Devil to flight, *Matth.* iv. 10, 11. So also upon his approach towards the two possessed *Gergesens*, the Devils that possessed them made a hideous outcry, *What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God, art thou come hither to torment us before the Time?* and were *forced* to depart immediately upon his Command, *Matth.* viii. 29.—— nor did he only vanquish them himself in all the Personal conflicts he had with them, but he also *gave* his Disciples *Authority over all Devils*, Luke ix. 1. insomuch that, *Luke* x. 17. his Disciples acquaint him, *Lord, even the Devils are subject unto us through thy Name.* But these were only so many successful *Skirmishes* with those Powers of Darkness, in which they fought against him, sometimes in *single* Combat, and sometimes in smaller *Parties*: But the *main Battel*, in which they engaged him with *all* their power and might, and by winning of which he *compleated* his Conquest, and finally *subdued* them to his Empire, seems to have been that which he fought in his *last Agony*; wherein, after they had reduced him to the *utmost distress*, he struck them with the *spiritual Thunderbolts* of Horror and Confusion, and in a Panick Dread forced them to turn their Backs and flee from him. For *first*, it is evident that before he enter'd the Garden, where his Agony seized him, he *expected* some terrible *assault* from these *Infernal Powers*: So he tells his Disciples just before he went thither, *Hereafter I will not talk much with you, for the Prince of this World cometh and hath nothing in me*, i. e. give me leave *now* to discourse freely with you, because within a very *little while* I shall be so *engaged*, that I shall not be at leisure to discharge my Mind to you; for the Prince of Devils is *just now* mustering up all his Legions against me, and is *coming* to make his *last effort* upon me; but this is my Comfort, he will find *nothing* in me, no *sinful Inclination* to take part with him, no *guilty Reflection* to expose me to his Tyranny, *John* xiv. 30. and accordingly, *Luke* xxii. 53, when the *Jews* had apprehended him, he expostulates the Case with them, why they did not lay Hands on him before, when he *was daily with them in the Temple*; and then Answers himself, *But now is your Hour and the Power of Darkness*: As much as if he should have said, I need not wonder you did not seize me *sooner*; for this, alas! is the *appointed* Time wherein my *Father* had decreed to let loose the *Devils* and *you* upon me. Which plainly shews that in that dismal Hour he was assaulted by the *Devils* as well as by the *Jews*; for in all probability those crafty and *sagacious Spirits* had smelt out the *merciful design* of his approaching *Death, viz.* that it was to be a *ransom* for the Sins of the World; and therefore though they were *desirous* enough of his *Death*; as is apparent by their animating *Judas* and the *Jews* against him; yet dreading the *end* and *intention* of it, they resolve to imploy all their Art and Power to *tempt* and *deter* him from undergoing it, and either to prevail with him to *avoid* it by a shameful *Recantation*, or at least *not* to *consent* to it; that so being *forced* and *involuntary*, it might be *void* and *ineffectual*. In which black Design of theirs God himself thought meet *so far* to favour them as to give them his free *permission* to *try* him to the utmost; that so having *experienced* in himself the utmost force of Temptation that *Humane Nature* is liable to, he might thereby be touched with a more *tender sympathy* with it, or as the Author to the *Hebrews* expresses it, *That having suffered himself being tempted, he might be able*

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to succour them that are tempted, chap. ii. 17, 18. But then *Secondly*, if we consider the woful *Circumstances* of his *Agony*, it is evident, that it was the effect of some far *more powerful Cause* than merely a *natural Fear* of his ensuing Death and bodily Torment; for no sooner was he entred on that tragick Stage, but *he began to be sorrowful*, said St. *Matthew*, chap. xxvi. 37. or *to be sore amazed*, as St. *Mark*, *chap.* xiv. 33. or *to be very heavy*, as both; which Words, according to their native Signification, declare him to have been all on a sudden oppressed with some *mighty Damp*, which arising from some *fearful Spectacle* or *Imagination*, overwhelmed his Soul with an *unknown* and *inexpressible Anguish*, an Anguish that sunk and depressed him into as *deep* a Dejection as it was possible for an *innocent Mind* to endure; causing him to groan out that sad Complaint, *My Soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death*, περίλυπος ἐστιν ἡ ψυχή μου. *i. e.* My Soul is encompassed with Grief, and like a desolate Island surrounded on every Side with an Ocean of Sorrows, and that even *unto Death*; as if it had been *struggling* under some mortal Pang, and the Pains of Hell had got hold upon it. And so *intolerable* was his Passion, that though he liberally *vented* it both at his *Eyes* and *Lips* in *Tears*, and *Sighs* and sorrowful *Complaints*; yet that was not a sufficient *Discharge* for it, but through all the innumerable Pores of his Body it *poured* out itself *as it were in great Drops of Blood*, Luke xxii. 44. All which considered, I can by no means think that that which occasioned this bitter Agony was *merely* the *Prospect* of what he was going to suffer from the Hands of Men, since not only some *Martyrs*, but some *Malefactors* have suffered much more with less Dejection; and if you consult the History, you will find that he bore his *Death* far better than his *Agony*: From whence we have just Reason to believe that the *latter* was *more grievous* to him than the *former*, and that the Crucifixion of his *Body* on the *Cross*, was nothing near so painful to him as the Crucifixion of his *Mind* in the *Garden*, and since his Sufferings in his *Agony* are described with more tragical Circumstances than his Sufferings on the *Cross*, we have just Reason to conclude they were inflicted on him by *more spiteful* and *powerful Executioners*, and consequently that he endured the Tortures of *Men* only on the *Cross*, but of *Devils* in the *Garden*; where being left all alone *naked* and *abandoned* of the *ordinary Supports* of his *Godhead*, and having only an *Angel* to stand by and comfort him (*i. e.* to *represent* such Considerations to him of the *Benefits* and *Advantages* of his *Death*, as were most proper to fortify him against the Temptations which the Devils were then urging to deter him from it) he was in all probability surrounded with a *mighty Host* of *Devils*, who exercised all their *Power* and *Malice* to persecute his *innocent Soul*, to *distract* and *fright* it with horrid *Phantasms*, to *afflict* it with dismal *Suggestions*, and *vex* and *cruciate* it with dire *Imaginations* and dreadful *Spectacles*. *Thirdly*, If we consider that strange unaccountable *Drowsiness* which seized his Disciples, whilst he was in his *Agony*, it seems to have been the Effect of a *diabolical Power*; for before he entred into the Garden, he had *expressly* told them that the *Hour was come*, wherein he was to be taken from them by an untimely Death: So that one would have thought, the *dear Love* which they bore him, together with the *infinite Concern* they had in him, might have been sufficient to have kept them *awake* for a *few Hours*; yet notwithstanding he desired them to *watch* with him (being loath it seems to be left *alone*, in a dark Night, among a Company of horrid and frightful *Spectres*) upon his return to them he found them *fast asleep*, and though he gently upbraided them with their *Unkindness*, *What! could ye not watch with me one Hour?* Yet he no sooner left them but they fell asleep *again*; for as the Text tells us, *their Eyes were heavy*, heavy indeed, that could not hold up for a *few Hours* upon such an *awakening* Occasion. It is true, indeed, St. *Luke* attributes this prodigious *Drowsiness* of theirs to their *Sorrow*, and so it is usual in Scripture to put the *apparent* Cause for the *real*, when the *real* Cause is *secret* and *invisible*. But, how can we imagine that *mere Sorrow* should necessitate *three Men* to

fall *asleep together* under the most *awakening* Circumstances, all Things considered, that ever happened to Mortals? Why did it not as well force them to fall asleep again *afterwards*, when their Lord was *apprehended*, *condemned* and *crucified*? At all which Times they were doubtless rather *more sorrowful* than they were in the Garden: And therefore, it seems very probable, that there was a much *more powerful Cause* than *Sorrow* in the Case, *viz.* a *preternatural Stupefaction* of their Senses, by some of those *malignant Spirits* that were then conflicting with our Saviour; who, perhaps, to deprive him of the Solace of his Disciples Company, did by their *diabolical Art*, produce that *extraordinary Stupor* that oppressed them; that so having him all *alone*, they might have the greater *Advantage* to tempt and terrify him. *Fourthly* and *lastly*, If we consider the *Warning* our Saviour gave his Disciples, when they entred the Garden with him, of the *extraordinary Danger* they were in of falling into *Temptation*, it seems very probable that he *expected* and *found* there an extraordinary Concourse of *Tempters* or evil Spirits: For as soon as they were entred with him into the Garden, St. *Luke* tells us, that he bid them *pray that ye enter not into Temptation*, Luke xxii. 40. and when, notwithstanding this Admonition, they fell asleep the *first* Time, he bids them again *watch and pray that ye enter not into Temptation*, Matth. xxvi. 41. which Words plainly imply our Saviour's Apprehension of some *extraordinary Danger* they were in of being *tempted* in the very *Time* and *Place* of his *Agony*; and what more probable Account can be given of this Apprehension of his than this, that he found vast *Numbers of evil Spirits* there, by whom he himself at that very Time was furiously *tempted* and *assaulted*, and that therefore having experienced their *Power* and *Malice* in *himself*, he thought meet to admonish his *Disciples* (who were much less able to resist them than *he*) to stand upon their Guard, lest they should tempt *them* as they had tempted *him*.

For these Reasons it seems highly probable that this *last Agony* of our Saviour was nothing else but a mighty *Struggle* and *Conflict* with the *Powers of Darkness*; who having, by God's *Permission*, muster'd up all their Strength against him, intending *once more* to try their Fortune against him, and if possible to *tempt* or *deter* him from prosecuting his *Design* of *redeeming* the World, were in the end gloriously *repulsed* by his persevering *Resistance*, and forced to flee before him: And of this his glorious *Victory* over them he made an open Shew upon the *Cross*, where, in despite of all those *Terrors* and *Temptations* they had exercised him with, if possible to *divert* him from laying down his Life for the World, he *freely* and *voluntarily* poured out his Blood as a Sacrifice for the Sins of Mankind. And hence the Apostle tells us, *Col.* ii. 15. that on his Cross, *he spoiled Principalities and Powers*, *viz.* in that *victorious Act* of laying down his Life to ransom us from their Power, in despite of their most *exquisite Temptations* to the contrary, *and made an open Shew of them triumphing over them.* And by this glorious Victory he finished his *Conquest* of those *infernal Powers*, so that from thenceforth they never durst assault him more; but like *vanquished Slaves*, were forced to yield their *unwilling Necks* to the Yoke of his Empire, and (though with infinite *reluctance)* to obey *his* Will, and execute *his* Orders; and hence we are told, that *by his Death our Saviour hath destroyed him that hath the Power of Death, that is, the Devil*, Heb. ii. 14. so that *now* at his powerful Name *every Knee must bow*, or every Being yield Obeisance, not only *of things in Heaven, and of things on Earth*, i. e. of Angels and Men, *but of things under the Earth too*, i. e. of Devils, who notwithstanding they are incensed with an *implacable Animosity* against him, and would gladly pull him down from his Throne, if they had but *Power* answerable to their *Malice*; yet having long since experienced the Might of his *victorious Arms*, even then when they had him at the *greatest Advantage*, and being thereby driven into *everlasting Despair* of prevailing against him, they have from thenceforth been forced by the mere *Dread* and *Terror* of his Power, to *submit* themselves to him, and to become his *Servants* and *Ministers* in his heavenly Kingdom: So that

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now whatsoever they do, it is by his *Permission* or *Order*, who holds their mischievous Power in Chains, and lets it loose, or restrains it, as he pleases.

And thus having proved at large that both the *good* and *bad* Angels are Christ's *Subjects* and *Ministers*; I proceed, in the second Place, to shew *wherein* their *Ministry* to Christ, in his Kingdom, consists.

And, in the *first* Place, I shall shew wherein the *Ministry* of *good Angels* consists.

And *Secondly*, wherein consists the *Ministry* of *bad Angels*. And because the Philosophy of the *Nature* and *Operations* of Angels is far above the ken of our short-sighted Understanding, I shall not presume to enquire any farther into the *Ministry* of either *good* or *bad Angels* than the *Scripture* gives me light; in which we find these seven following Instances of the *Ministry* of *good Angels* under Christ.

First, They *declare*, upon occasion, his *Mind* and *Will* to his Church.

Secondly, They *guard* and *defend* his Subjects against *outward* Dangers.

Thirdly, They *support* and *comfort* them upon great *Undertakings*, and under pressing *Calamities*.

Fourthly, They *protect* them against the rage and fury of *evil Spirits*.

Fifthly, They *further* and *assist* them in all their *religious Offices*.

Sixthly, They *conduct* their separated *Spirits* into the Mansions of Glory.

Seventhly, They are to *attend* and *assist* Christ in the great Solemnity of the *Day of Judgment*.

I. One Instance of the *Ministry* of *Angels* in the Kingdom of Christ, is their *declaring* upon occasion his *Mind* and *Will* to his Church and People; for thus most of those *Prophetick Messages* which God from Time to Time sent to the World were *conveyed* to the Prophets by the *Ministry* of *Angels*: So *Daniel*, for Instance, had all his Visions from an *Angel* of God, *vide Dan.* viii. 16. and *ch.* ix. 22, 23. as also *chap.* x. 11. so also the Prophet *Zechariah*, *vide Chap.* i. 9, 14, 19. and *chap.* ii. 3, 4. and sundry other Instances there are of it in the New Testament, *vide Matt.* i. 20, 21. as also *chap.* ii. 13, 20, 22. and *Luke* i. 13, 30, 31. and many other Places: And it was an *ancient* and *Catholick Doctrine* among the *Jews*, that all *Prophecy* was communicated by the *Mediation* of *Angels*; whence the Pharisees, describing St. *Paul* as a Prophet, thus pronounce concerning him, *We find no evil in this Man; but if a Spirit or Angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God*, Acts xxiii. 9. And accordingly we find our Saviour *sending forth* his holy Angels on *prophetick Messages* to his Church: For so St. *John* received his Revelations from Christ by the Hand of an *Angel*, *Rev.* i. 1. and xxii. 16. And an *Angel* is sent from Christ to *Philip* to *bid* him go to the *Ethiopian* Eunuch to expound to him the Prophecy of *Isaiah*, Acts viii. 26. And *Cornelius* received a *Message* from Christ by an *Angel*, requiring him to send to *Joppa* for St. *Peter* to instruct him in the Christian Religion, in *Acts* x. 3, 4, 5. But since that Christ hath revealed his *whole Will* to his Church, and transmitted it down by a *standing Scripture*, this *Ministration* of the holy Angels is in a great Measure *ceased*, and to this *written Word* of his we are *intirely* referred, as to the *perpetual Rule* of our Faith and Manners; insomuch that if thenceforth even *an Angel from Heaven should preach any other Gospel to us* than what we have there received, he is pronounced *accursed*, Gal. i. 8. Not but that sometimes, and upon *great Emergencies*, they may be still sent from Heaven with *new Messages* to us, to discover some *useful Secret*, or to *inspire* our Minds with the *Notice* of some *future Contingencies*, that are of great Moment to us; though this very *rarely*, it being no Part of their *ordinary Ministry*. But, since the *Revelation* of the Gospel was *compleated*, to be sure they never reveal any *new Doctrine* to us; they may be *assisting Geniuses* to our *Understandings*, to excite in them a true *Apprehension* of what is *already* revealed, by impressing our Imaginations with clear and distinct *Ideas* and *Representations* of Things that are revealed more obscurely: But to suppose that they still reveal *new doctrinal Truths* to us, is not only to deny the *Perfection* of written *Revelation*, but to open a wide Door to all manner of *Enthusiasm*.

II. Another Instance of the *Ministry* of *Angels* in the Kingdom of Christ is their *guarding* and *defending* his Subjects against *outward* Dangers; for thus the Angels are said *to encamp round about those that fear God, to deliver them*, Psal. xxxiv. 7. And, though I see not sufficient Reason to be fully persuaded that *every* faithful Subject of the Kingdom of Christ hath an *appropriate Guardian Angel* appointed to him, yet from that Caution of our Saviour, *Matth.* xviii. 10 it is evident, that he employs his Angels to *attend* as *an invisible Life-guard* upon the Persons of *all* good Christians; for, saith he, *Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you that in Heaven their Angels do always behold the Face of my Father which is in Heaven*, i. e. Those blessed Spirits which are appointed by God to be their *Guardians* upon Earth, have yet their continual *returns* and *recourse* to God's *glorious Presence* in Heaven; and having always access to him, to offer up *Requests* or *Complaints* in their behalf, it must needs be a very dangerous Thing for any to presume to *despise* or *offend* them; lest he thereby provoke those *mighty Spirits* to sue out and execute some *Commission of Vengeance* upon him. From whence it is evident, that the blessed Angels are greatly *concerned* in the *Vindication* and *Protection* of the Faithful, and that that Promise, *Psal.* xci. 10, 11, 12. is still in Force, *viz. There shall no evil befal thee, for he shall give his Angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy Ways; they shall bear thee up in their Hands, lest thou dash thy Foot against a Stone:* And this they do sometimes by *removing* such *evil Accidents* from us, as in the Course of *necessary Causes* must have befallen us: For there is no doubt but these *powerful Spirits* have a mighty Influence upon *necessary Causes* (at least upon a great many of them) and can *retard*, or *precipitate*, or *vary* or *divert* their Motions, as they see occasion, and thereby *prevent* a great many *Accidents* which must otherwise have befallen, had they permitted them to proceed in their *natural Courses*. Other Times again they *divert* the mischievous Intentions of our *Enemies* by injecting sudden *Fears* into them, and brandishing horrid *Phantasms* before their *Imaginations* (as the Angel did the flaming Sword before *Balaam*) when they are just upon executing their *Malice*. Sometimes again they *warn* us of *Dangers* approaching, either by some external *Sign* or unaccountable *Impression* on our *Fancies*, by which we are vehemently *solicited*, without any *visible Cause* or *Reason*, either to *proceed* very *cautiously* in the Ways where our Danger lies, or to *stop* and *forbear* a while, or steer some *other* Course. Of all which there are innumerable Instances to be found in History.

III. Another Instance of the *Ministry* of *Angels* in the Kingdom of Christ, is their *supporting* and *comforting* his faithful Subjects upon difficult *Undertakings*, and under great and pressing *Calamities:* For thus not only our Saviour himself was *comforted* in his last *Agony* by an Angel from Heaven, *Luke* xxii. 43. but St. *Paul* also tells us, that being in imminent Danger of being shipwreck'd in a Storm in his Voyage to *Rome*, *there stood by him in the Night an Angel of God, whose he was, and whom he served, saying, fear not*, Paul, *thou must be brought before* Cæsar, *and lo God hath given thee all them that sail with thee*, Acts xxvii. 23, 24. So also when the Apostles by an Order from the High Priest were cast into the common Prison, the Text tells us, *That an Angel of the Lord by Night opened the Prison-doors, and brought them forth, and said, go stand and speak in the Temple to the People all the Words of this Life*, Acts v. 19, 20. So also in the ancient Martyrologies of the Church, we meet with sundry Relations of the *Appearances* of *Angels* to the suffering *Martyrs*, and of the wonderful *Comforts* they administred to them to *support* their Faith and Patience under their *Agonies* and *Torments*. And although since the *Cessation* of *Miracles* they do not *ordinarily* perform this Ministry to us in *visible Appearances*, yet there is no doubt, but as they are *Spirits*, they have *spiritual* and *invisible* Ways of conversing with *our Spirits*, and of administring *Comforts* to us in our *Needs* and *Extremities*; for though they can have no *immediate Access* to our *Mind*, which is a dark *mysterious Chamber*, into which no other Eye can penetrate, but his

who

who is *the ſearcher of all Hearts*, yet that they can vehemently *impreſs* our *Fancies* with joyous *Repreſentions*, and thereby exhilerate our *drooping Spirits* to that degree, as to *tranſport* us into Raptures of *bodily Paſſion*, is not to be doubted, there being ſo many ſenſible *Experiments* of it in the ancient *Prophets*, whoſe *Imaginations* were ſometimes ſo vehemently impreſſed with *frightful Idea's* by the Angels which converſed with them, as that they immediately fell into an *Agony*, and were ſeized with unaccountable *Horrours* and *Tremblings*; and not only the *Prophets* themſelves that *ſaw* the *Angel*, were thus affected, but ſometimes their *Companions* too that *ſaw* him *not*; of which you have an Inſtance in *Dan*. x. 7. where *Daniel* tells us, that *he alone ſaw the viſion* of the Angel, and that *the Men that were with him ſaw not the Viſion, but a great quaking fell upon them, ſo that they fled to hide themſelves*; which is a plain Evidence of the great *Power* which the *Angels* have over our *bodily Paſſions*, even when they are *inviſible* to us; ſo as to *ſtrike* what *Note* ſoever they pleaſe upon them, whether it be *Fear*, or *Sorrow*, or *Joy*; and it being in their Power to excite our *Paſſions* to what degree they pleaſe, there is no doubt but that being *miniſtring Spirits* they can and do miniſter *Joy* and *Comfort* to us, whenever our Caſe and Circumſtances require it.

IV. Another Inſtance of the *Miniſtry* of *Angels* in the Kingdom of Chriſt, is their *protecting* his Subjects againſt the *Rage* and *Fury* of *evil Spirits*; for conſidering with what a *fierce* and *indefatigable Malice* thoſe *malignant Spirits*, which in vaſt Numbers rove above in the Air, are animated againſt *Mankind*, and eſpecially againſt the *Subjects* of *Chriſt*, their moſt *dreaded* and *implacable* Enemy; and conſidering alſo the *mighty Power* they have, as they are *Angels*, to do miſchief, it is not to be imagined but that, were they not *oppoſed* and *reſtrained* by a *mightier Power* than their *own*, they would never be able to forbear exerciſing their direful *Rage* and *Cruelty* upon us, till they had converted this Earth into *Hell*, and made this *School* of our *Probation* the *Place* of our *Torments*; and as for the Kingdom of *Chriſt*, whoſe *Subjects* have ſo ſolemnly *renounced* their Yoke and Dominion, to be ſure they would never ceaſe infeſting it with the fiery Darts of their *Malice*, till they had utterly *ruined* and *deſtroyed* them; and therefore to *prevent* their *miſchievous* Attempts, God in Mercy hath thought meet to commit us to the *Guardianſhip* of his holy *Angels*, and to ſend them forth under the *Conduct* of *Jeſus* our Mediator, to fight againſt theſe helliſh *Powers* in the Defence of his Church and People: For ſo God promiſed *Jeruſalem*, *Zech* ii. 5. that *he would be as a Wall of Fire round about her*, *i. e.* as the moſt learned Expoſitors ſuppoſe, by *ſurrounding* her with a *Guard* of *Angels*, whom, in the *Defence* of his People againſt *evil Angels*, he *maketh a flaming Fire*, as the Pſalmiſt expreſſeth it, *Pſalm* civ. 4. and in *Rev*. xii. 7. we read of *a War in Heaven*, (or the Airy Region, of which the Devil is called the Prince) *Michael and his Angels fought againſt the Dragon, and the Dragon fought and his Angels*; which War *Michael* undertook, as the foregoing Verſes tells us, in the Defence of the *Woman that was cloathed with the Sun*, which all agree was the Chriſtian Church; ſo alſo in *ver*. 9. of St. *Jude*'s Epiſtle, we read that *Michael the Archangel contended and diſputed with the Devil about the Body of* Moſes; or *Jewiſh* Church, ſo called for the ſame Reaſon that the Chriſtian Church is called *the Body of Chriſt*. And it is very probably ſuppoſed, that that *Hedge* which the Devil complained God had ſet about *Job*, and about his Houſe, by which he was hindred from breaking in upon him, was no other than a *Guard* of *Angels*, by which he was *driven back*, as oft as he attempted to execute his *Rage* and *Malice* upon him, *Chap*. i. 10. Now by what *Means* or *Inſtruments* the *good Angels* war againſt and repel the *evil* ones, is I conceive, an Enquiry beyond our Cogniſance, *Revelation* (from whence we receive all our Notions of the *State* and *Oeconomy* of the *inviſible* World) being wholy *ſilent* in the Caſe; only thus much we may ſay, without any way preſuming beyond our Capacity, that *Spiritual Agents* can as eaſily ſtrike upon *Spirits*, as *Bodily Agents* do upon *Bodies*; and though we, who are

Spectators

Spectators only of *coropcreal* Motion, can give no account of the *Manner*, how *one Spirit* acts upon *another*, yet there is no reason at all to doubt, but that they have some way of *impressing* one another, and *communicating* to each other a mutual *sense* and *feeling* of each other's *Pleasures* and *Displeasures*; and if so, then it is easie to suppose, that the more *powerful* any Spirit is, the *stronger* and *more exquisite Impressions* of its *Displeasure* it can make upon *other* Spirits, and consequently that the *good Angels*, who by preserving their *Innocence*, and improving their *Perfections*, have *augmented* and *redoubled* their *natural Strength* and *Vigour*, are much *more powerful* than the *bad* ones, who have rather *impaired* it, and so are much more able to *withstand* and *repel* the violent Impressions of the *bad Angels*, than the *bad Angels* can *theirs*; so that though the *bad Angels may*, and oftentimes *do resist* and *oppose* the *good*, yet they can *never* conquer them; but in the Conclusion are still *forced* to *flee* before them; as being unable to withstand their *more powerful Impressions*. Since therefore we *wrestle not with Flesh and Blood*, *i. e.* not only with Flesh and Blood, *but against Principalities*, *against Powers*, *against the Rulers of the Darkness of this World*, *against spiritual Wickednesses in high Places*, *i. e.* against the several *Ranks* of *Devils* that are in the Air, under the Command and Conduct of *Beelzebub* their Prince, *Ephes.* vi. 12. And since these *Apostate Spirits* are by much *too strong* and *powerful* for *us*; so that we are left to grapple with them *alone*, by our own *single* Strength, they would infallibly *vanquish* and *lead* us *captive* to eternal Ruine, God hath thought meet to *subject* his *holy Angels* to the Command of our compassionate *Mediator*; that so whenever we are too hardly *beset* by these *evil Spirits*, he might send them forth to *guard* and *protect* us against them, and either to *assist* us in our Conflicts with them, or to *chase* them away from us, when we are no longer able to withstand them; and accordingly we have a sure Word of Promise, that if we *resist the Devil*, *he shall fly away from us*, James iv. 7. not that *our* weak *Resistance* is in *itself* sufficient to put those daring and mighty Spirits to flight; but the meaning without doubt is, that if when they *assault us* with any *Temptation* to Sin, we do but oppose them with a *sincere* Resolution, God will not *permit* us to be *vanquished* by them; but whenever they press too hard upon us, will be sure to send down some good Angel to us to *repel* and *drive* them away from us; for so he hath promised, that *he will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able*, *but will with the Temptation also make a way to escape*, *that we may be able to bear it*, 1 Cor. x. 13. which plainly implies, that should God suffer him, the Devil can tempt us *above what we are able*; and this without doubt he is ordinarily *hinder'd* from by the timely *Interpositions* of the *holy Angels*, who when *our Strength* begins to *fail*, are always ready to *second* us, and with their victorious Arms to *encounter* and put to *flight* those *evil Spirits* that do so importunately *tempt* us.

V. Another Instance of the *Ministry* of *Angels* in the Kingdom of Christ, is their *furthering* and *assisting* his Subjects in the *Works* and *Offices* of Religion; for since they are said to *minister to them who shall be Heirs of Salvation*, there is no doubt but that they minister to them in the Discharge of their *religious Obligations*, upon which their *Salvation* depends; and since, as our Saviour assures us, *there is joy in the presence of the Angels over one Sinner that repents*, Luke xv. 10. we cannot but suppose that so far as their own *Ability*, and the *Laws* of the *invisible World* will permit them, they do *promote* and *further* our Repentance; since in so doing they *contribute* to their *own Joy*; and in a word, since the Scripture assures us, that the *Angels* are *present* in our holy *Assemblies* (which that Passage of St. *Paul* seems necessarily to imply, 1 Cor. xi. 10. *For this Cause ought the Woman to have Power over her Head*, i. e. to be veiled in the sacred Assemblies, *because of the Angels*, or out of a decent *Respect* and Reverence to those *blessed Spirits* who are supposed to be *present* there) since, I say, they are *present* in our *religious Assemblies*, we cannot reasonably suppose them to be *present* merely as *Idle Auditors* and *Spectators*, who have nothing

else

else to do but only to *observe* and *gaze* upon our holy *Solemnities*; and therefore must conclude that their great Business there is to *assist* us in the Performance of them, to remove our *Indispositions*, and recollect our *Wandrings*, to fix our *Attention*, excite our *Affections*, and inflame our *Devotions:* For besides that, as they are the *Ministers* of the Divine Providence, they have many Opportunities of *presenting* good *Objects* to us, and *removing Temptations* from us, of *disciplining* our Natures with *Prosperities* and *Afflictions*, and of so *ordering* and *varying* our *outward* Circumstances, as to render our *Duty* more *facile* and *easie* to us; besides which, I say, as they are *Spirits* they have a very *near* and *familiar access* to our *Souls*; not that they can make any *immediate* Impressions on our *Understanding* or *Will*, which are a *Sphere* of *Light*, to which no *created* Spirit can approach, it being under the *immediate Oeconomy* of the *Father* of *Spirits*; but yet being *Spirits* there is no doubt but they *may*, and oftentimes *do* insinuate themselves into our *Fancies*, and mingle with the *Spirits* and *Humours* of our Bodies, and by that means never want opportunity both to suggest *good Thoughts* to us, and raise *holy Affections* in us. For that they can work upon our *Fancies*, is apparent, else there could be neither *angelical* nor *diabolical Dreams*, and if they can so act upon our *Fancies*, as to excite new *Images* and *Representations* in them; they may by this Means communicate *new* Thoughts to our *Understanding*, which naturally prints off from the *Fancy* those Ideas and Images which it there finds set and composed. And as they can work upon our *Fancies*, so there is no doubt but they can influence our *Spirits* and *Humours*; else they have not the Power so much as to *cure* or *inflict* a Disease; and by thus working upon our *Spirits* they can *moderate* as they please the *Violence* of our *Passions*, which are nothing but the Flowings and Reflowings of our *Spirits* to and fro from our Hearts; and by influencing our *Humours* they can *compose* us, when they please, into such a *sedate* and *serious Temper*, as is most *apt* to receive *religious Impressions*, and to be influenced by the *heavenly Motions* of the Holy Ghost. These Things, I doubt not, the blessed Angels *can* and frequently *do*, though we *perceive* it not, and though by the *Laws* of the World of Spirits they may probably be *restrained* from doing their *utmost* for us, that so we may still act with an uncontrouled *freedom*, and be left under a necessity of a constant and diligent *Endeavour*; yet this we may be sure of, that as the *evil Angels* are always busy to *pervert* and *seduce* us from our Duty, so the *good* are no less active to *reduce* us to, and *assist* us in it.

VI. Another Instance of the *Ministry* of *Angels* in the Kingdom of Christ is, their *conducting* the *separated Spirits* of his *faithful* Subjects to the Mansions of Glory. It was an ancient Tradition among the *Jews*, that the *Souls* of the *Faithful* were *conducted* by *Angels* into *Paradise*, of which the *Chaldee* Paraphrase makes mention on *Cant.* iv. 12. and this Tradition of theirs is confirmed by our Saviour, *Luke* xvi. 22. where he tells us, that when *Lazarus* died, *he was carried by Angels into* Abraham's *Bosom*, *i. e.* into that Place of Refreshment where the Soul of *Abraham*, who was the Father of the Faithful, dwells; and in all probability that *fiery Chariot and Horses* wherein *Elias* was mounted up to Heaven, 2 *Kings* ii. 11. was nothing but a *Convoy of Angels*; and accordingly *Tertullian, de Anima, cap.* 52. styles the Angels *Evocatores Animarum*, *i. e.* the Messengers of God, that call forth the lingring Souls out of their Bodies, and shew them the *Paraturam diversorii*, the Preparation of those blessed Mansions where they are to abide till the Resurrection. And this Office the *good Angels* do perform to the *Souls* of the *Faithful*, not merely to *congratulate* their safe Arrival into the World of Blessedness, though there is no doubt but that they, who do so heartily *rejoyce in the Conversion of Sinners*, are ready enough to *congratulate* their *Glorification*; but that which seems to be the *great reason* of this Ministration of theirs, is to *guard* holy *Souls*, when they leave their *Bodies*, through those *lower Regions* of the *Air*, which are the *Seat* and *Principality* of the *apostate Angels*, who may therefore be very reasonably

supposed

ſuppoſed to be continually *lying in wait* there, like Birds of Prey, to *ſeize* upon the Souls of Men, as ſoon as they are eſcaped out of the Cage of their Bodies into the open Air, and either to *ſcare* and *terrify* them in their Paſſage to Heaven, or to lead them away *captive* into their dark Priſons of endleſs Horrour and Deſpair; and therefore to *prevent* their *affrighting* good Souls (which is all the hurt they can do them) as they *paſs along* through their Territories, they are no ſooner parted from their Bodies, but they are taken into the *Cuſtody* of ſome good *Angel* or *Angels*, who *guard* them ſafe through the Enemies Quarters, and *beat off* thoſe *evil Spirits* from them that would fain be *infeſting* and *aſſaulting* them; and it is not at all improbable, but that by this very thing thoſe *evil Spirits* do diſtinguiſh what Souls do *belong* to them from what do not, *viz.* their being *deſtitute* of, or *attended* with this holy *Guard* of *Angels*. When they behold a *ſeparated Spirit* under this *heavenly Convoy*, they fly away from it with infinite *Rage* and *Envy* to ſee it irrecoverably *reſcued* out of their Power to make it miſerable; but when they perceive one *deſtitute* and *abandoned* of this *angelick Guard*, they immediately ſeize it as their *own*, and ſo commit it to their Chains of *Darkneſs*. And as the *good Angels* do guard *good Souls* as they paſs through the *Air*, againſt the Power and Malice of the *Prince of the Power of the Air*; ſo they alſo *conduct* and *guide* them to their *Manſions* of *Bleſſedneſs*. For when the departed Soul is wafted through the *Air* into thoſe immenſe Tracts of *Æther*, wherein the Sun and all the heavenly Bodies ſwim, how would it be poſſible for it in ſuch a *vaſt* and *unknown Continent* ever to find its *way* to the Seat of the Bleſſed, without the *conduct* of ſome *experienced Guide?* And who can be better *experienced* in that *Celeſtial Road*, than thoſe winged *Meſſengers* of the Almighty King, who in the execution of his *high Beheſts* are always travelling to and fro between Heaven and Earth? And therefore our Saviour hath *committed* the *ſeparated Spirits* of his faithful Subjects to theſe moſt *skilful* and *faithful Guides*, who in purſuance of his *Commiſſion* are ſome or other of them ſtill *attending* upon every *good* Man's deceaſe, to receive his Soul into their *Cuſtody*, as ſoon as ever it is expired, and to *guard* it againſt *evil Spirits*, as it paſſes through the *Air*, and thence to conduct it through all thoſe *ſpacious* Fields of *Æther*, which extend themſelves far and wide beyond all the viſible Lights of Heaven, to thoſe *happy Abodes* which the Divine Goodneſs hath prepared for *glorified Spirits*.

VII. And *laſtly*, Another Inſtance of the *Miniſtry* of *Angels* to our Saviour in his Kingdom, is their *attending* and *aſſiſting* him in the great Solemnity of the *Day of Judgment*; for thus in all his moſt *ſolemn* and *conſpicuous* Works of Providence, our Saviour hath ſtill been pleaſed to make uſe of the *Miniſtry* of his holy *Angels*; ſo when he came to ratify his *Covenant* with *Jacob*, the myſterious Preface of that great *Solemnity* was a *Ladder* reaching from Heaven to Earth, and the *Angels aſcending* and *deſcending* upon it, which was doubtleſs intended for an *Emblem* of that *Everlaſting Covenant* by which *Man* was to aſcend to *God*, and *God* to deſcend to *Man*; ſo alſo when the *Law* was delivered by him upon the Mount, the *Angels* deſcended *with him*, and pitched their Tents about it in Circles of flaming Fire, to ſignify to the People thoſe *Flames* of *Vengeance* that would certainly purſue and ſeize them, if they were not *obedient* to thoſe Words that were thence delivered to them; ſo alſo when he was *born* into the World, the holy *Angels* came down to ſing his *Chriſtmas* Carol, and at once to *proclaim* and *celebrate* his Nativity; and it is the Opinion of ſome learned Men, that that *Multitude* of the *Heavenly Hoſt*, which St *Luke* ſpeaks of, and who ſang that Anthem of *Glory be to God on high* at our Saviour's Nativity, *Luke* ii. 13. contain'd the whole *Nation* of *Angels*, becauſe in *Heb.* i. 6. it is ſaid, that *when God brought in the firſt begotten into the World he ſaid, let all the Angels worſhip him*; that is, as they underſtand it, when our Saviour was born, God gave Order to all the *Angels* of Heaven to *come down* and *do Homage to him*, who was e'er long to be their Sovereign *Lord* under the moſt high *Father*. Thus alſo a little before *Jeruſalem* was deſtroyed

ſtroyed, *Joſephus* tells us, that the *Heavens* were ſpread with *Troops* of armed Men, who without doubt were the *bleſſed Angels*, that by their phantaſtick *Combats* in the Air did pre-ſignify the enſuing *Tragedy* of that bloody City. It is no wonder then if the great *Solemnity* of *Doomſday*, of which *Jeruſalem's* Deſolation was only a mournful *Type*, ſhall alſo be *adorned* and *illuſtrated* with the Preſence and Attendance of the *holy Angels:* For this *great Tranſaction* is to be the *winding up* of the vaſt Bottom of divine Providence over the whole Race of fallen and degenerate Mankind, and the *cloſe* and *concluſion* of the *mediatorial* Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour; and therefore will without doubt be performed with the *greateſt Grandeur* and *Magnificence.* This is to be the great Day of our Saviour's *Triumph*, wherein his *Friends* ſhall be *crowned*, and his *Enemies* made his *Foot-ſtool*; and ſuch a *Solemnity* may well deſerve the *Attendance* and *Miniſtry* of all the heavenly Angels, who accordingly ſhall then *deſcend* with our Saviour from the higheſt Heavens in bright ethereal Bodies, ſuch as ſhall render them *gloriouſly conſpicuous* to all the lower World, and ſo fit to *adorn* the *Triumphs* of that *glorious* Day; for ſo the Scripture aſſures us, not only that *he ſhall deſcend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Arch-angel, and with the Trump of God,* 1 Theſſ. iv. 16. but alſo that *he ſhall come in his Glory, and all his holy Angels with him,* Matth. xxv. 31. and that *he ſhall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels,* and that *he ſhall come in his own Glory, and in his Father's, and of his holy Angels,* Luke ix. 26. and in a Word, that *he ſhall come in the Glory of his Father with the holy Angels,* Mark viii. 38. But *what* their *Miniſtry* is to be in that *great* Day, I ſhall hereafter have occaſion to ſhew, when I come to diſcourſe of that *ſolemn Tranſaction.*

And now having explained the Miniſtry of the *good* Angels *under* Chriſt, I proceed to treat of the Miniſtry of the *evil* Angels *to* him, which principally conſiſts in theſe four Particulars:

Firſt, In *trying* and *exerciſing* the *Virtues* of his Subjects.

Secondly, In *chaſtening* and *correcting* their *Faults* and *Miſcarriages.*

Thirdly, In *ſearing* and *hardening* his incorrigible *Rebels.*

Fourthly, In *executing* his *Vengeance* on them in another World.

I. The Miniſtry of *evil* Angels to Chriſt, conſiſts in *trying* and *exerciſing* the *Virtues* of his Subjects; for this being the State of our *Trial* and *Probation*, wherein we ſtand *Candidates* for thoſe everlaſting *Preferments* in the other World, our bleſſed Lord hath thought meet to ſurround us with *Difficulties* and *Temptations*, that ſo being in continual *Conflict* with them, we may never want Opportunity to *exert* and *exerciſe* our *Virtues*, and to give the moſt glorious *Proofs* of our *Courage* and *Conſtancy:* For *Difficulty* is the Spur of *Endeavour*, and the Whet-ſtone of *Virtue*, without which the *faireſt Graces* that belong to humane Nature, would be altogether *uſeleſs*, *worthleſs*, and *unactive*; ſuch as *Faith* and *Patience*, *Temperance* and *Equanimity*, *Courage*, and *Reſignation* to God, all which would ſcarce deſerve the *Name* of *Virtues*, if they had not ſome *Difficulties* to conteſt withal. Now one of the *greateſt Difficulties* with which our bleſſed Lord *tries* and *exerciſes* theſe *Graces* of our *Nature*, is the *Temptations* of *evil Spirits*, who, as ſo many *aſſiſting Geniuſes* to the *corrupt Inclinations* of our *Nature*, are permitted by him to rove about the World in innumerable Swarms to *tempt* and *elicite* thoſe *Inclinations* into *Action*, and theſe being *Spirits*, have a much *nearer* Acceſs to the *Souls* of Men than any *material* Agents whatſoever; for though they are totally debarred from all kind of intercourſe with the *immediate Operations* of the *reaſonable Soul*, and can no more look into its *Thoughts*, than we can into the *Bowels* of the *Earth*, yet our *Fancies* and *Imaginations* lying *open* to them, there is no doubt but they *can* and oftentimes *do* make what uſe they think fit of the *Animal Spirits* there, and *diſpoſe*, and *order*, and *diſtinguiſh* them, juſt as the *Painter* doth his numerous Colours that lie confuſedly before him in their *ſeveral Shells*, into the *Pictures* and *Phantaſms* of whatſoever Objects they pleaſe, and *continue* and

repeat thoſe *Pictures* in our *Fancies* as long and as oft as they think meet; and then conſidering what the *natural Uſe* of the *Fancy* is, both to the *Underſtanding* and *Will*, and how it prompts the *one* with Matter of *Invention*, and ſupplies it with variety of *Objects* to work on, and draws forth or elicits the *other* to chuſe or *refuſe* thoſe *Objects* it preſents, according as they are *amiably* or *odiouſly* repreſented; conſidering theſe Things, I ſay, it is notorious what mighty *Advantages* the *evil Spirits* have of inſinuating their black *Suggeſtions* to our *Minds*. And then they being very *ſubtil* and *ſagacious* by Nature, and having had above five thouſand Years *Experience* to cultivate their Talent of tempting and ſeducing us, (*that* having been their *Trade* ever ſince they became Devils) to be ſure they can never be at a *Loſs* when or how to apply themſelves to us, and to nick us with *ſuch Temptations* as are moſt *convenient* to our *ſeveral* Inclinations, Conditions, and Circumſtances; and accordingly, 2 *Cor.* ii. 11. the Devil is ſaid to have his Methods or *Devices*, *i. e.* his ſtated *Rules* by which he governs his miſchievous Practice of tempting and ſeducing Souls; and 2 *Tim.* ii. 26. we are told of *the Snare of the Devil*, or his crafty Devices to entangle and captivate Mens Souls.

Now though the *Deſign* of theſe *evil Spirits* in tempting Chriſt's Subjects, is doubtleſs to *ſeduce* and *ruin* them, yet it is evident that the *Deſign* of *Chriſt* in permitting them to tempt them, is only to *try* and *exerciſe* them, and *rouſe* them out of their Sloth and *Inactivity*, and by the continual *Alarms* of theſe their reſtleſs Adverſaries to keep them upon their *Guard*, and make them more *watchful* and *vigilant*; and accordingly from the Conſideration of that *Permiſſion* which theſe *evil Spirits* have to tempt us, we are in Scripture frequently exhorted to *Activity* and *Vigilance*; ſo 1 *Pet.* v. 8. *Be ſober, be vigilant; for the Devil your Adverſary goeth about like a roaring Lion, ſeeking whom he may devour*; So alſo, *Epheſ.* vi. 11. *Put on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to ſtand againſt the Wiles of the Devil.* Since therefore the *Devil's tempting* us is uſed by Chriſt as a *Motive* to excite our *Activity*, it is evident that Chriſt's *Intention* in permitting him to tempt us is to *excite* and *ſtimulate* us thereunto. It is true, the Devil's Temptations may, and often have a quite *contrary Effect* on us than Chriſt *intended*; they may *ſeduce* us from our *Innocence* and *Duty*, and thereby involve us in *everlaſting Perdition*; but if they do, it is our *own* Fault, and through our *own* Conſent, without which they can *never* prevail againſt us, for we are aſſured, that *if we reſiſt the Devil he will fly away from us, and* that *we ſhall not be tempted by him above what we are able*; and we are furniſhed by our Saviour with *ſufficient Strength* and *Aſſiſtance* to repel his moſt powerful Temptations; but if inſtead of imploying our *Strength*, and exerciſing our *Virtue* in a *vigorous Reſiſtance* of him (which is the Thing Chriſt intended in permitting him to tempt us) we will *tamely* ſuffer ourſelves to be *led Captive* by him, we muſt thank ourſelves for all the dire and miſerable Conſequents of it.

II. Another Inſtance of the *Miniſtry* of theſe *evil Angels* to Chriſt is their *chaſtening* and *correcting* the Faults and Miſcarriages of his Subjects. Thus upon great and high *Provocations* he many Times lets *looſe* theſe evil Spirits upon us, and permits them to pain, and puniſh us either immediately by *themſelves*, or mediately by their *Inſtruments:* For ſo only to prevent St. *Paul's* being *exalted above Meaſure through the Abundance of his Revelations, there was given a Thorn in the Fleſh, the Meſſenger of Satan to buffet him, i. e.* as it ſeems moſt probable, ſome *evil Spirit* was ſent to him from Satan, the Prince of Devils, to inflict ſome corporal *Pain* or *Diſeaſe* on him (for ſo *the grieving Thorn*, Ezek. xxviii. 24. ſignifies a ſore bodily Affliction) and though *he ſought the Lord thrice for this Thing that it might depart from him*, yet could he receive no other Anſwer, but *My Grace is ſufficient for thee*; ſee 2 *Cor.* xii. 7, 8, 9. and it is very probable that thoſe *Weakneſſes*, *Diſeaſes*, and *Deaths*, which were inflicted on the *Corinthians* for their irreverent Communication of the Lord's Supper, *vide* 1 *Cor.* xi. 30. were inflicted by the Miniſtry of *evil Angels*, to whoſe Power and

and Malice they were *abandoned* by our Saviour, as a *just Chastisement* of their Prophaneness; for so it is evident the incestuous Person was *corrected* upon the Sentence of his Excommunication, which was, that he should be *delivered up unto Satan for the Destruction of his Flesh*, 1 *Cor*. v. 5. where the *delivering him* up to *Satan* seems to have been in *answer* to Satan's *demanding* of him; for so in Scripture the Devil is sometimes called, *The Accuser of the Brethren*, which *accuses them before God Day and Night*, Rev. xii. 10. and sometimes the Ἀντίδικος, which signifies, *an Adversary in Court of Judicature*, that impleads and accuses us before God, 1 *Pet*. v. 8. Now this *Accusation* of his is sometimes *false* and *groundless*, as in the Case of *Job*, upon which Account he is called, Διάβολος the Calumniator, but sometimes he accuses us *truly*, for Faults that are *real* and *highly Criminal*, upon which he *requires* us of God as he did St. *Peter*, Luke xxii. 31. *i. e.* he *requires* us as the Executioner does a Malefactor, *to sift or winnow us as Wheat*, *i. e.* to shake and afflict us; and whenever God is pleased to *answer* this Request, he is truly said *to deliver us up to Satan*: And this *Power of delivering up* to Satan such Persons as are *justly* accused of great and scandalous Sins, God hath communicated to his *Church*, upon which *Delivery* in the primitive Ages (when there were no *Magistrates* to second the Churches *Censures*. with corporal Punishments) Satan, as the *Lictor* or *Executioner* of our Saviour, *immediately* seized the Criminal, and inflicted on him some bodily *Disease* or *Torment*, which St. *Ignatius* calls, Κόλασις Διαβόλȣ, *the Punishment of the Devil*, *Epist. ad Roman.* for so in our Saviour's Time, and before and after it, it was usual for *evil Spirits*, by God's *Permission*, to inflict *Diseases* and *Torments* on Mens Bodies, of which there are innumerable Instances in the *Gospels*, and the Writings of the *primitive Fathers*; and that this was then the usual Consequence of *Excommunication*, is evident from that Phrase, *For the Destruction of the Flesh*, which plainly signifies some *corporal Punishment* consequent to that tremendous *Sentence*, which is therefore called *a Rod*, 1 Cor. iv. 21. because of the *bodily* Correction that followed it.

But since the *Power* of *corporal Punishments* hath been derived by Christ upon Christian *Magistrates*, he very rarely chastens his Subjects with any *bodily Pains* by the immediate Agency of *evil Spirits*, but hath wholly deposited it in the Hands of the *Temporal Powers*, who are now his sole *Ministers and Revengers to execute Wrath upon those that do evil.* But yet still upon occasion he so far makes use of the *Ministry* of the *Devils* in *correcting* us, as to permit them to *excite* wicked *Men*, and especially wicked *Princes* and *Governours* to Plague and persecute us: When he sees his *Church*, or any particular *Part* of it degenerating from the *Purity* of his Religion, or waxing *cold* and *remiss* in their Love and Duty to him, he many Times gives a *loose* to these malignant *Spirits*, who always burn with *inveterate Rancour* against it, and permits them to *provoke* and *stimulate* its Enemies, to exert and imploy their Power against it: So that whatsoever Mischiefs *wicked Princes* or *Men* do to the *Church* of Christ, or to any Part of it, they do it only as the *Instruments* of these *evil Angels*, and by their mischievous *Suggestions* and *Instigations*; for so Christ tells the *Church* of *Smyrna*, in *Rev*. ii. 10. *The Devil shall cast some of you into Prison*; that is, the *wicked Governours* there shall do it by the *Instigation* of the *Devil*, to whom I will certainly give *permission* to *instigate* them thereunto; for so Christ is said to *have the Keys of the bottomless Pit*, Rev. i. 18. that is, Power to *confine* or let *loose* those *evil Spirits*, that inhabit it, at his Pleasure; and when he thinks fit to confine them, we find the Church enjoys *Peace*, and *Rest*, and *Prosperity*, *Rev*. xx. 1, 2, 3, 4. But no sooner doth he let them *loose* again, but they are immediately *instigating* the *wicked Powers* of the Earth, to *fight* against it and *persecute* it, *ibid. ver*. 7, 8, 9. from whence it is evident, that the *Power* of these *evil Spirits* to *excite* evil Princes or Men to *persecute* his *Church*, is under the *Restraint* and *Determination* of our Saviour; that they can proceed no farther in this their mischievous Design, than *he* thinks meet to *permit* them; and consequently, that in all those *Persecutions* to which they

excite their *Instruments*, they are but the *Ministers* and *Executioners* of Christ, even as the *Dog* is the *Shepherd*'s in worrying the *straying* Sheep into the Fold.

III. Another Instance of the *Ministry* of *evil Spirits* to Christ is, their *hardening* and *confirming* incorrigible and obstinate Sinners in their wicked Purposes: For when notwithstanding all those powerful *Methods*, which in the Administration of his Government Christ uses to *reduce* and *reclaim* Men, they still persist in their *Rebellion*; when they have conquer'd his *Grace*, quenched his *Spirit*, broke through all his *Persuasions*, and baffled all his *Arts* of saving them, he many Times *withdraws* from them those powerful *Aids* of his *Spirit*, and of his *holy Angels*, which they have wilfully *neglected*, and utterly *abandons* them to the Powers of *Darkness*, whom from thenceforth he freely *permits* to tempt and seduce them, and to roll them on at their Pleasure from Sin to Sin, and from one Degree of Sin to another, till they have *filled up* the Measure of their Iniquities; and this, without doubt, is the *severest Punishment* that Christ inflicts upon Sinners on this side Hell; for this is a kind of *Damnation* above ground to be *delivered* up alive to those restless Furies, who having free Leave to back and ride us at their Pleasure, to be sure will never cease *stimulating* and *spurring* us on from Wickedness to Wickedness, till they have *leapt* us headlong into the *everlasting Burnings*. And this, I conceive, is the Meaning of God's *hardening* Sinners so often mentioned in the Holy Scripture, which doth not at all imply, that God by any *positive Act* of his own *infuses* any sinful Quality into Mens *Wills* to excite or stimulate them to Sin, as *some* Men have blasphemously enough asserted; *for God cannot be tempted with Evil, neither tempteth he any Man*; but when Men have a long while *hardned* themselves against all the powerful *Impressions* of his *Grace*, and in the Pursuit of their wicked Courses have turned a *deaf Ear* to all his *Persuasions* to the contrary, then, as a just *Punishment* of their incorrigible *Obstinacy*, he many Times withdraws from them the Influences of his Grace, and *delivers them up to Satan*, or, which is the same Thing, *permits* him to seize them as his own, and to take *Possession* of them, and as a *wicked Soul* to *animate* and *act* them in all their Wickedness; for so the Devil is said ἐνεργεῖν, to *work in the Children of Disobedience*, so that these Children of Disobedience are a Sort of ἐνεργούμενοι, or Persons that are *possessed* and *acted* bp the Devil, And too many deplorable Instances there are of *wicked* Men that Sin on at that Rate, as if they were *really acted* by some *diabolical Genius*, that are *hurried* into such *monstrous* Extravagances of Wickedness, as are neither *pleasant*, nor *profitable*, nor *reputable*; so that they gratify no *Passion* or *Appetite* in humane Nature by committing them, but do seem to Sin merely for the *sake* of Sinning, out of a kind of *preter-natural Malice*, when they can scarce give any *other Reason* to themselves why they do such an Action, but only this, *because it is wicked*; so *truly Diabolical* is their *Love* of Wickedness, so *abstract* from all those *Motives* which are wont to affect the *Passions* and *Appetites* of Men, that it is hardly resolvable into any *other Reason*, but that they are *delivered up* by God to be *informed* and *acted* by the Devil; who having once obtained the *Possession* of them, continually plies them with *Temptation*, and never ceases *urging* and *pressing* them forward from one Degree of Wickedness to another, till at length he hath *seared* and *hardened* them into final and incurable *Impenitence*. And *this* in particular was the Case of *Judas*, who having long persisted in his *Thievery* and *Sacrilege*, notwithstanding all those *Warnings* and *Admonitions* our Saviour had given him to the contrary, was at length *abandoned* to that *Devil* to whose Temptations he had been so *obsequious*; upon which it is said, that *the Devil entred into him*, Luke xxii. 3. and the Devil being in *Possession* of him, immediately *provokes* and *irritates* him to the *foulest* and most *horrible Villany* that ever any mortal Creature was guilty of; for so, *John* xiii. 2. we are told, that *the Devil put it into the Heart of Judas to betray Christ*. But as yet it seems he was not *totally abandoned* to the Devil, who had only *Permission* to make that black and dire *Proposal* to him; after which our Saviour attempts by the most

pathetick *Peersuasions* to prevent his *Compliance, Mark* xiv. 21. notwithstanding which, the Wretch being still *enticed* by his own *Covetousness* to *listen* to that horrid *Suggestion*, our Saviour having *marked* him out for a *Traytor*, by giving him the Sop, it is said again, that *Satan entred into him*; and upon this *second* Entrance our Saviour gives him up for *desperate*; for, *that thou dost*, saith he, *do quickly, John* xiii. 27. As much as if he had said again, Now I find the Devil has the *full possession* of thee, and that henceforth there remains no more *hope* of reclaiming thee; go therefore and dispatch thy wicked Purpose as soon as thou pleasest. So that now, it seems, he was *entirely delivered up* to the Devil; who thereupon immediately *hurries* him to the Execution of his black Design.

IV. And *lastly*, Another Instance of the *Ministry* of *evil Spirits* to Christ, is, their *executing* his *Vengeance* on incorrigible *Sinners* in the other World. For since, as I have shewn before, our Saviour makes use of the Power and Malice of these *evil Spirits* to *correct* and *chasten* Men in *this* Life, why may we not thence conclude, that he makes use of the same to *plague* and *punish* them in the Life *to come*; especially considering that they bear the *same Malice* to us in the *other* Life that they did in *this*; for they tempt us to *sin here* for no other End but that they may make us *miserable there*; therefore to be sure that *same Malice* of theirs which excites them *now* to contribute all they can to our *sin*, will equally provoke them *then* to contribute all they can to our *misery*, and render them altogether as active in *tormenting* us in *Hell* as they were in *tempting* us upon *Earth*; and then considering that *Spirits* can act upon *Spirits*, as well as *Bodies* upon *Bodies*, and that the *more powerful* any Spirit is, the *more vigorously* it can act upon our Spirits, we may be sure that those *evil Spirits* being *Angels* by Nature, are incomparably *more* powerful than the *Souls* of Men, and therefore can act upon them with unspeakable *more Force* and *Vigour* than one *Soul* can on another; for the *weaker* any Spirit is, the *more passive* it must necessarily be to those Spirits that are *stronger* and *more powerful*, and therefore by how much *weaker* wicked *Souls* are than wicked *Angels*, by so much *more passive* must they be to their Power, and consequently, by so much *more liable* to be vexed and tormented by them: And since in all probability the *Disproportion* which *Nature* hath made between the Power of *Angels* and *Souls* is far greater than that which *Sin* hath made between the Power of *one Angel* and *another*, we may reasonably conclude, that wicked *Souls* are far *more* impressible by the Power of wicked *Angels*, than *wicked Angels* are by the Power of *good Angels*; and therefore since the *good Angels* can make such *violent* Impressions upon the *wicked* ones as they are not *able* to endure, but are still forced to *fly* before them, as oft as they encounter them, *vid. Pag.* 404. what *intolerable* Impressions can *wicked Angels* make upon *wicked Souls* when they are *abandoned* by God to their *Malice* and *Fury*; for though our *Souls* are no more impressible by *corporeal* Action than the *Beams* of the *Sun* are by the Blows of a *Hammer*, yet that they can feel the Force of *spiritual Action*, we find by every Day's Experience: For so a *Thought*, which is a *spiritual* Action, if it be very *horrible* or *dismal*, doth as sensibly *pain* and *aggrieve* our *Souls* as the most exquisite *Corporeal Torment* can our *Bodies*. Now there is no doubt but *evil Spirits* can suggest preternatural *Horrors* to our *Minds*, and repeat and urge them with such *Importunity* and *Vehemence* as to render them most exquisitely *painful* and *dolorous*; of the Truth of which we have a woful *Example* in that miserable Wretch *Francis Spira*, who upon that woful Breach he made in his *Conscience* by *renouncing* his Religion, notwithstanding he had received several kind *Admonitions* from Heaven to the contrary, was *forsaken* of God, and *delivered up* Alive into the Hands of those dire *Tormentors* of *Souls*; whereupon, though he had not the least Symptom of *bodily Melancholy*, he was immediately seized with such an inexpressible *Agony* of *Mind*, as amazed his Physicians, astonished his Friends, and struck Terror into all that beheld him; for he was so near to the Condition of a *damned Spirit*, that he verily believed *Hell* itself was *more tolerable* than those

invisible

invisible Lashes that his *Soul* endur'd without any Intermission; and therefore he often wish'd that he were in Hell, and as often attempted to dispatch himself thither, in hope to find *sanctuary* there from those *direful Thoughts* which continually prey'd upon his Soul. Now, that these *Horrors* were inflicted on him by a *Diabolical Suggestion* is evident, both by the impenetrable *Hardness* and *Obstinacy* of his Mind against all the Motives of *Repentance* that accompanied them, and by the horrible *Blasphemies* they frequently extorted from him. And if now in this Life they have so much Power to *torment* our *Minds*, whenever God thinks it meet to let them *loose* upon us, what will they have *hereafter*, when our wretched *Spirits* shall be utterly *abandoned* to their Mercy, and they shall have a *free* Scope to exert their *Fury* on us, and *glut* their hungry *Malice* with our *Torment* and *Vexation*? And since it is evident they do not want *Power*, we may certainly conclude, even from that *natural Malignity* that is in the Temper of a Devil, they do not want *Will* to plague and torture us in the *other* World. And this *Will* and *Power* of theirs our Saviour makes use of as the *common Executioner* of his Vengeance upon incorrigible Sinners in the *other* Life: For as soon as ever a wicked *Soul* departs from its *Body*, it is immediately consigned into the Hands of those *diabolical Furies*, who, like so many hungry Hounds, seize it with infinite Greediness, and fall a *tearing* and *worrying it* with horrible *Suggestions* without any Pause or Intermission; and by continually recording its Sins to it, and reproaching it with the *Folly* of them, and putting it in mind of that dismal *eternal* Futurity it must suffer for them, do incessantly *sting* and *vex* it with Swarms of *dire Reflections* and *tormenting Thoughts*, which are the only *Instruments* of Torment that can fasten upon a *Soul*. And hence in *Matth.* xviii. 34. the Devils, to whom the wicked Servant was *delivered* up by his Master for his Cruelty toward his Fellow-servant, are called *Tormentors*, as being the *Ministers* of our Saviour's just *Vengeance* upon wicked and incorrigible Offenders.

And thus having shewn at large, that the good and bad Angels are the *Ministers* of Christ, and wherein their *Ministry* to him *consists*, I proceed to the

III. Third Sort of the Ministers of Christ's Kingdom, *viz.* The *Kings* and *Governours* of the World; for though there are many *Infidel Kings* in the World that know not Christ, and that never submitted themselves to his Empire, but instead of that do openly defy and persecute his holy Religion, yet *these* of right are *subject* to *him*, though in fact they are *enslaved* to the *Devil*, and *he* hath the *Disposal* of their Crowns, and the *Command* of their Power, and doth actually *imploy* and *use* it, even as he doth the Power of the *Devils*, in the Prosecution of the righteous *Ends* of his Government. And though too many of *those Kings* who, by their *visible* Profession of Christianity, have actually *submitted* themselves to the Scepter of *Christ*, have yet together with Christianity espoused the Interest of sundry *Antichristian* Principles, in pursuance of which they have been as inveterate Enemies and Persecutors of *the Truth as it is in Jesus*, as any of the Heathen Kings or Emperours; yet *these* also, notwithstanding their Male-administration, are the *Subjects* and *Ministers* of our Saviour; and it is by *his Authority* and *Commission* that they reign, and by *his* omnipotent *Providence* that all their wicked Designs and Actions are *over-ruled* to gracious Ends and Purposes; so that all the *Sovereign Powers* of the Earth are *subjected* by God to the Dominion of our Saviour; and in their respective Kingdoms and Empires are only his *Substitutes* and *Vicegerents*: For so we are told not only that *all Judgment is committed to him*, and that *all Power is committed to him in Heaven and Earth*; and that he *is Heir of all Things*, and hath *Power over all Flesh*, but also that he is *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, the only Potentate, the Head of all Principality and Power*, and the *Prince of all the Kings of the Earth*, vide *Page* 382. and so the Fathers of the Council of *Ariminum* tell *Constantius* the *Arian* Emperour, that it was by Christ's Donation that he held his Empire, *δι' οὗ [Χριστοῦ] σοι καὶ τὸ βασιλεύειν οὕτως ὑπῆρξεν ὥστε καὶ τῆς καθ' ἡμᾶς οἰκουμένης κρατεῖν*, by him, *i. e.* Christ, thou art appointed to reign over all the

World; upon which account *Liberius* advises him, *μὴ μάχου πρὸς τὸν δεδωκότα σοι τὴν ἀρχὴν ταύτην, μὴ ἀντ' εὐχαριστίας ἀσεβήσῃς εἰς αὐτόν*, do not fight against Christ who hath bestowed this Empire upon thee; do not render him Impiety instead of Gratitude; and to the same purpose *Athanasius* tells us, *Λαμβάνων οὖν ὁ χριστὸς τὸν θρόνον μεθέστησεν αὐτὸν καὶ ἔδωκε τοῖς ἁγίοις χριστιανῶν βασιλεῦσιν ἐπαναστρέψαι τούτους ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰακώβ*, *(i. e.)* that Christ having received the Throne, hath translated it from Heathen to Holy Christian Kings to return them back to the House of *Jacob.* So that both from *Scripture* and the current Doctrine of the *Primitive Church*, it is evident that all the *Sovereign Powers* upon Earth are *subjected* to our Saviour, and are only the *Ministers* and *Viceroys* of his universal Kingdom.

But for the farther Prosecution of this Argument, I shall shew in the first Place, that by this their *Subjection* to Christ, they are not *deprived* of any *natural Right* of their *Sovereignty*; and *Secondly*, that they are *obliged* by it to certain *Ministries* in the Kingdom of Christ.

First, That by their *Subjection* they are not *deprived* of any *natural Right* of their Sovereignty; for when our Saviour pronounced the Sentence, *Give unto Cæsar the Things that are Cæsar's*, he thereby *renewed* the Patent of Sovereign Powers, and *re-invested* them in all the *natural Rights* of their Sovereignty, which doubtless are included in *the Things that are Cæsar's*; for upon the Pharisees asking him that captious Question? *Is it lawful to pay Tribute to Cæsar?* He doth not answer, yes, it is *lawful*; which yet had been a sufficient Reply to their Question; but calls for a Tribute-Peny, and having asked them *whose Image and Superscription* that was upon it? And being answered *Cæsar's*; he returns them an Answer much larger than their Question, *Give unto Cæsar the Things that are Cæsar's*, *(i. e.)* it is certain that you are obliged *not only* to pay *Tribute* to *Cæsar*, but also to render him *whatever else* is *due* to him by virtue of his Sovereign Power; for Sovereign Power being *immediately* founded on the Dominion of God, hath from thence these two *unalienable* Rights derived to it, to which all the *essential* Rights of Sovereignty are reducible: *First*, to command in *all* Things as it judges most convenient for the *Publick Good*, where God hath *not countermanded*; for the Power of Sovereigns descending from God can *only* be *limited* by *God* or *themselves*; for if they are *limitable* by any *other Power*, they are Subjects to *that Power*, and so can no longer be *Sovereigns*; and if they are *limitable* only by *God* or *themselves*, then where they are *not limited either* by *God* or *themselves*, they must necessarily have a *right* to *command*. *Secondly*, The other *unalienable* Right that is derived to them from God, is to be *accountable only* to *God*; for by deriving to them *Sovereign* Power, God hath exalted them above *all* Powers, but his *own*; and therefore since *no* Power can be *accountable* but to a *superiour* Power; and since *Sovereigns* have *no superiour* Power but *God*, it is to *God only*, from whom they received their Power, that they are *accountable* for the Administration of it. These therefore are the *natural Rights* of Sovereign Powers, and these *Rights* remain *intire* and *inviolate* in them, notwithstanding their *Subjection* to the Mediatorial Scepter of our Saviour, as I shall endeavour to shew in the Particulars,

First, Therefore, by this their *Subjection* to Christ they are not *deprived* of their *natural Right* of commanding in *all Cases* as *they* shall judge most convenient for the *Publick Good*, where *God* hath *not countermanded* them: For the *Christian* Religion is so far from any way *retrenching* the Power of *Princes*, that it abundantly *confirms* and *enforces* it, by requiring us to *submit to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake*; to *be subject to the higher Powers*, and that *not only for Wrath, but for Conscience sake*; *to submit to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates*; to *render Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Custom to whom Custom, Fear to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour*; *(i. e.)* to submit to all the Lawful Impositions of our Princes, whether it be of Taxes, or of any other matter whatsoever; and in all the New Testament there is only *one Limitation* made of our Obedience, which is a *natural* and *eternal* one, and that is,

that *we ought to obey God rather than Man*; that is, when *Man*'s Command and *God*'s do apparently *clash* and *interfere* with each other; for in this Case the Magistrate hath *no* Right to be obeyed, because *his Will* is *countermanded* by a *superior Authority*: By which *Exception* this general *Rule* is confirmed, that in all Cases whatsoever, whether *Temporal* or *Spiritual*, *Civil* or *Ecclesiastical*, Sovereign Powers have an *unalienable Right* to be obeyed. For if their Right to be obeyed in the Kingdom of Christ, extended *only* to *Civil* and *Temporal* Causes, their Authority would be very much *lessened* and *retrenched* by their *Subjection* to our Saviour; since *before* their Subjection to him, it undoubtedly extended to *all Causes whatsoever*; because being *Sovereign* under *God*, it could have no other *Bounds* or *Limits* but what *God* had set to it, and therefore since *before* their Subjection to Christ, God hath *bound* their Authority by no other *Law* but that of *Nature*, it must either be made appear that *the Law of Nature* did then *limit* their Authority only to *Civil* Causes (which I am sure is impossible) or it will necessarily follow, that it extended also to *Spiritual* and *Ecclesiastical*, and if it did so *then*, it must do so *still*, unless it be made appear that *Christianity* hath *retrenched* and *lessened* it. It is true, Christ hath erected a *standing Form of Spiritual Government* in his Church, and it is as true that *all Government*, whether Spiritual or Temporal, includes a *Legislative Power* in it, or a Power of commanding its Subjects; but this is no *Limitation* of the commanding *Power* of *Sovereign* Princes, who must still be obeyed in *all Things* where Christ hath not *countermanded*, though the Church should command the *contrary*; for Christ *never authorized* the Governours of his *Church* to *controul* the commanding *Power* of *Princes*, but hath left all Matters of *Indifference* as absolutely to their Disposal and Determination as ever they were *before* his *Spiritual Government* was erected, and Matters of *Indifference* are the sole Matter both of *purely Civil* and *purely Ecclesiastical* Laws; and therefore after the Church by its Legislative Power hath *restrained* any Matter of *Indifference*, the Civil Sovereign, in whose Disposal all Matters of *Indifference* are, may, if he see good occasion, *release* and *free* it again, and impose the contrary Matter of *Indifference*; and if he doth so, all Christian People are *obliged* by the *express Commands* of Scripture to *obey* him; for the Scripture Commands of Obedience to the Temporal Sovereignty have no such Exception as this annexed to them, *except the Church command the contrary*; and in Matters of Duty what have *we* to do to make Exceptions where *God* hath made *none*? And indeed where there are *two Legislative Powers*, the one must necessarily be subject to the other, or it will be *impossible* for the Subject in many Cases without Sinning to obey either. For whenever the Commands of the *Civil State* do happen to *clash* with the Commands of the *Church*, either the Church must be obliged to submit to the State, or the State to the *Church*, or the *Subject* cannot possibly obey the *one* without sinning against the *other*. If it be said, that the *Church* must submit to the *State*, in Things appertaining to the *State*, and the *State* to the *Church*, in Things appertaining to the *Church*, and so *both* are supreme in their *own Province*: I would fain know, what is to be done when these *two Powers* differ about the Things which appertain to the *one* and to the *other*: The State saith, this appertains to *me*, and so *commands* it; the Church saith, this appertains to *me*, and so *forbids* it; now in this Case it is certain, that one or the other must be obliged to *give way*, or the Subject can neither *obey* nor *disobey* either without sinning; and whichsoever of the *two* it be that is obliged to give way, by virtue of that Obligation it must be *subjected* to the *other*: So that now the Question is only this, which of the *two Legislative Powers* is *Supreme*; and it would be impertinent to say, that they are *both Supreme* in their *proper Province*, the one in *Civil*, and the other in *Spiritual* Causes, because it is in *suspence* whether the Cause in which they countermanded each other, be *Civil* or *Spiritual*; so that in this Case I must either be obliged to *obey neither*, which is notoriously *false*, or whatsoever the Cause be in itself, to yield Obedience to the *one*, and to disobey the *other*; and if I must obey the Civil Power, whe-

ther the Caufe be Civil or Spiritual, then the *Civil Power* muft be *fupreme* in both; as on the contrary, if I muft obey the Church Power whether the Caufe be Spiritual or Civil, it will as neceffarily follow that the *Church Power* is *fupreme* in both. Which *latter* we are fure is *falfe*, as the Scripture is *true*; for in civil Matters it is agreed on all Hands, that the Scripture concludes *all Men* as well *Clergy* as *Laity*, under the Obligation of *Obedience* to the *Civil Sovereign*, and that none are exempt; no not the *Apoftles* themfelves, or the *Bifhops* fucceeding them in the Spiritual Government, whether we confider them *feparately* or *conjunctly*, and if in all *Civil Caufes* I am obliged to *obey* the Command of the *Civil Power*, then it is moft certain that if the Cafe in conteft between *that* and the *fpiritual* Power be really *civil*, I am obliged to *difobey* the countermand of the fpiritual Power; but if on the contrary I muft *difobey* the Command of the *civil Power*, fuppofing the *Caufe* to be *fpiritual*, which Way can I turn myfelf without danger of finning; fo that unlefs one of thefe two Powers are *fupreme* in *both* Caufes, whenever *any* Caufe happens to be contefted between them, (as to be fure *many* muft between two *Rival Powers*) I can neither *obey* nor *difobey* without finning againft one or both; and can we imagine that God, who is the *God of Order and not of Confufion*, would ever involve us in fuch *inextricable* Difficulties by fubjecting us to *two fupreme* Powers that are fubject to *clafh* and *interfere* with one another? Wherefore although as I fhall fhew by and by, the Church is invefted with a *Legiflative Power*, whereby it can *reftrain* Things that were *free* and *indifferent* for its own *Security*, and *Decency*, and *Order*; yet this Power is *fubordinate* to the civil Legiflation (which is in all Caufes fupreme) and cannot enact againft it, controul or countermand it in *any indifferent* Matter, whether *temporal* or *fpiritual*, but ftands obliged to *recede* to the *civil Sovereign*, who hath the *fupreme* Difpofal of all *indifferent* Things, and in all contefted Cafes to *veil* its Authority to his.

And accordingly we find that during the firft three hundred Years, when the *Civil Powers* were *Enemies* to Chriftianity, and did no otherwife concern themfelves with it than to *ruin* and *extirpate* it, the Church made *Laws* for *itfelf*, and by its *own Legiflative Power* enacted whatfoever it judged convenient or neceffary for its own *Security* or *Edification*; but yet it never *prefumed* in any indifferent Matter to *contradict* the Laws of the Empire; nor did ever any Chriftian, becaufe he was a Subject of the *Church*, refufe to obey his *Prince* in any Cafe whatfoever, where God had not *countermanded* him; as is moft evident from hence; becaufe in all the Hiftory of thofe Times, we do not find *one Inftance* of any Chriftian that fuffered for fo doing. In thofe Days, there were no *Martyrs* for *indifferent* Things, which to be fure there muft have been, had the Church then taken upon it to *determine* Indifferences *contrary* to the Edicts of the Emperor; but the only Thing they then fuffered for, was their *Refufal* to *difobey* the *exprefs Will* of *God*, in compliance with the wicked *Wills* of *Men*; which is an unanfwerable Argument, that in thofe Days the Church never *affumed* to itfelf any *fupreme* Authority over *indifferent* Things, either in *Spirituals* or *Temporals*, but left that in thofe Hands where *God* had placed it, *viz.* in the Hands of the *Civil Sovereign*, with whofe Imperial *Laws* its *Canons* never interfered, with whofe Legiflative Power it never *joftled* for the Wall, but chearfully *fubmitted* to it in all Things, wherein it was not *determined* to the *contrary* by the exprefs Will of *God*. And when afterwards the *Civil Sovereign* embraced *Chriftianity*, he did not thereby *diveft* himfelf of his *Supremacy* over all *indifferent* Things in all Caufes whatfoever, but by his *own Authority* he not only *convened* General Councils, and for the moft Part *prefided* in them (as particularly in that of *Ephefus*, *Chalcedon*, the fixth General One in *Conftantinople*, called *Trullo*, and feveral others) and *inforced* their *Canons* with his own Imperial *Edicts*, but many Times made *Laws*, even in Church Matters *without* them; to which the Ecclefiaftical Governors yielded the fame *Obedience* as they did to the *Decrees* of the moft œcumenical Councils; for fo, not only *Conftantine*, who was the firft Chriftian Emperor,

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made Laws concerning the *Festivals* of the Church, ordaining what might and what might not be done upon the *Lord's Day*; and not only several of those Ecclesiastical *Laws* in *Gratian*'s Collection are now *confessed* on all Hands, to be the *Laws* of *Princes*, but the first Titles of the Code are all of them concerning *Ecclesiastical Matters*, and so also in the Laws of the *Goths* and *Vandals*, the *Authenticks* and *Capitulars* of the *French* Kings, there are numerous Instances of the *Legislative Power* of *Kings* in *Ecclesiastical* Matters; and this *Power* was openly asserted by the *French* Embassadours in the Council of *Trent*, *viz.* that the Kings of *France* following the Examples of other Christian Emperors had frequently made *Laws* for the *Church*, which were so far from being countermanded by the Bishops of *Rome*, that they received many of them into their own *Canons*; and that the *Gallican* Church had been always governed by the Ecclesiastical *Laws* which were made by their *Kings*; and Cardinal *Cusanus* tells us, *lib.* 2. *Cath. Concord. c.* 40. that he himself had collected eighty six Chapters of *Ecclesiastical Laws*, made by the ancient *Emperours*; besides many others of *Charles* the *Great* and his Successors, in which there are many Things concerning the *Popes* and all other *Patriarchs*, declaring that he never read that ever any Pope was asked to *confirm* those Laws, or that ever they were accounted the *less Obligatory* because they wanted the Papal *Confirmation.* And indeed before Pope *Hildebrand*, who was the *first* Bishop that challenged the supreme *Legislation* in *Ecclesiastical* Affairs, it is notoriously known that the greatest *Prelates* of the Church frequently addressed themselves to the *Emperor* for such good *Laws*, as the present *Necessities* of the Church called for. Thus Pope *Damasus* intreated the Emperor *Honorius* to make a Law for the more *regular Election* of the *Popes.* Thus also *Sergius*, Patriarch of *Constantinople*, supplicated the Emperor *Heraclius* to forbid by a *pragmatick Sanction*, the admission of any Man into the *Clergy*, unless it were into a dead Place; and it was, (as it is thought) upon St. *Ambrose*'s Intreaty, that *Theodosius* made a Law for the disannulling of *Marriages* within the *prohibited Degrees*; so when the Emperor *Justinian* turned the ancient *Canons* of the Church into *Imperial Laws*, he was so far from being *accused* of being an *Usurper* of the Ecclesiastical Power, that Pope *Adrian* IV. highly *extolls* him for so doing, though in his 133*d* Novel, that Emperor affirms, that μηδὲν ἄβατόν ἐστιν εἰς ζήτησιν τῇ βασιλείᾳ, nothing is impervious to the Inspection and Cognisance of the King; in which St. *Austin* accords with him, when he affirms the Kings do nothing but their Duty, *Cum in suo regno bona jubeant, mala prohibeant, non solum quæ pertinent ad humanam societatem, verum etiam quæ pertinent ad divinam Religionem, i. e.* when they make good *Laws*, not only concerning *humane Society*, but also concerning *divine Religion*; by all which it is evident, that the *Civil Powers* for several Ages after they became *Christians*, did *claim* and *exercise* a *supreme Legislative* Power in Causes *Ecclesiastical* as well as *Civil*, and this without any *Contradiction* from the Bishops and Governours of the *Church*; for as for that saying, *Quid Imperatori cum Ecclesia?* What hath the Emperor to do with the Church? It was not the Language of the *Church*, but of that Fire-brand *Donatus*, who was the *Ringleader* of one of the most factious and turbulent *Heresies* that ever infested the Christian World: And if in those Instances wherein they exerted their *Legislative* Power in *Ecclesiastical* Causes, the Church had no Power to *controul* or *countermand* them, then neither hath it in any *other* Instance of the *same Nature*; and if so, then notwithstanding their *Subjection* to our *Saviour*, they still retain their *supreme commanding* Power over all Matters of *Indifference*, whether it be in *Civil* or *Ecclesiastical* Causes. But then,

Secondly, By this their *Subjection* to our *Saviour*, they are not deprived of their *natural Right* of being *unaccountable* to any but to God alone, through Jesus Christ; for all the *difference* between the State of Sovereign Powers in this Matter, *before* and *after* their Subjection to Christ's mediatorial Scepter, is only this, that *before* they were accountable to God only *immediately*, whereas now they are accountable to God only through *Jesus Christ:* For Christ

Christ being authorized by God to *mediate* for him; or, which is the same Thing, to be his *Vicegerent* in the World, all Things are now *subjected* to him; and God now rules and judges, rewards and punishes all Men by *him*, whether they are *Subjects* or *Sovereigns*, *Vassals* or *Emperors*; for so in the great Transaction of the Last Day we are told, that the *Kings* of the Earth shall be arraigned before *his* Judgment-Seat, *Rev.* vi. 15, 16, 17. but they are now accountable *immediately* to Christ, who, during this *Evangelical Oeconomy*, is to rule and judge for *God*; yet in respect of any *earthly Tribunal*, they remain altogether as *Sovereign* and *unaccountable* as ever: For to be *Sovereign* and *unaccountable* are convertible Terms; and it is nonsense to say, either that any Power is *unaccountable* which hath any *Superiour*; or, that any Power is *accountable* which is *Sovereign* and *Supreme*; so that by necessity of Nature those Powers which are *Sovereign* upon Earth, must be *unaccountable* to any Power upon Earth; because to call to Account is an Act of *Superiority*, and that which is *Supreme* can have no *Superiour* to account to: So that unless it be made appear, that Christ hath erected some *earthly* Tribunal, that is superiour to the Tribunals of the *Supreme Civil* Powers, he must of necessity have *left* them as unaccountable as he *found* them. Now it is plain, that our Saviour erected *no other* Tribunal in this World, but only that of the *Spiritual* or *Ecclesiastical Government*, which he was so far from advancing *above* the Tribunal of the *Civil Sovereign*, that while he was upon Earth he acknowledged himself to be *subject* and *accountable* thereunto, though he was then *the supreme Bishop* and Head of that spiritual Regiment; and this he did not only by recognizing *Cæsar*'s Right of receiving Tribute from him, of which I have spoken before, (for by bidding them *render to Cæsar the Things that are Cæsar's*, he *leaves* Sovereign Princes in the quiet Possession of all those *Rights* which he *found* them possessed of, and *requires* their Subjects to pay them whatsoever is essentially *due* to their *Sovereignty*, and whatsoever the *Laws* and *Customs* of Nations had before determined to be their *Right)* but also by acknowledging before *Pilate* the *Right* of the *Civil* Tribunal, to call him to Account, *John* xix. 1. where he confesses, that the Power by which *Pilate* arraigned him was *given him from above*; and by reprehending St. *Peter*, for endeavouring by Force to rescue him out of the Hands of the Civil Powers, *Put up thy Sword*, saith he, *into his Place*; *for all that take the Sword shall perish by the Sword*; Matt. xxvi. 52. in which Words it was far from his Intention to prohibit the Use of the Sword either to Governours, who, as St. *Paul* tells us, *bear not the Sword in vain*; or to private Persons in their own *lawful Defence*; for he commands his own Disciples to *buy them Swords* to defend themselves against Robbers and lawless Cut-throats, who, as *Josephus* tells, did very much abound in those Days, *Luke* xxii. 36. but all that he intended, was, to *forbid* drawing the Sword against *lawful Authority* in any Case whatsoever, tho' it were for the *Defence* and *Security* of his own Person; for this was St. *Peter*'s Case, who in the *Defence* of his *Saviour* resisted the High-Priest's Officers, who came armed with a *lawful* Authority to seize and apprehend him; in which our Saviour *plainly owns* himself *accountable* to the *Civil* Authority of his Countrey: For if he had not been so, it could be no *Fault* in St. *Peter* to endeavour to *rescue* him from its Ministers; and if *Christ himself*, while he was upon Earth, were *subject* to the *Civil* Authority, what an high Piece of Arrogance is it for those who are at most but his *Vicars* and *Ministers*, to claim or pretend an *Exemption*? And if it were so great a Fault in St. *Peter*, to draw his Sword against *lawful* Authority, though it were in the *Defence* of his *Saviour's Person*, then doubtless it is no less a *Fault* in his *Successors* to pretend a Right from St. *Peter* to draw their Swords against Sovereign Princes, though it be in the *Defence* of their *Saviour's Religion*. And as our Saviour *owned* himself subject and accountable to the *Civil* Tribunal, so St. *Paul*'s Injunction is universal, *Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers*; and surely, *every Soul* must include the whole Body of the *Clergy* as well as of the *Laity*, unless we can produce some *clear* and *express Exception* to the contrary; and as the Com-

mands extend *universally* to all, so doth the Reason of it also, *for the Powers that be are ordained of God*; and if we must be subject to them, because they rule by *God's Authority*, then it is certain there are none that are *subject* to *God*, but are under the Force and Obligation of this Reason. And then he goes on, *Whosoever resisteth the Power* (of whatsoever Degree or Order of Men he be) *resisteth the Ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves Damnation*; and if, according to the Law of our *Saviour*, it be a *damnable Sin* for any Person or Persons whatsoever to *resist* the *Civil* Authority, then it is a plain Case, that our Saviour hath not at all *depressed* the Sovereignty of the *secular* Powers, by *subjecting* it to any *superiour* Tribunal; but hath left it as *absolute* and *unaccountable* as ever it was *before* it was subjected to his Empire. And thus having proved that Sovereign Princes are not *divested* of any *natural Right* of their Sovereignty by their *Subjection* to the *mediatorial* Scepter of our Saviour; I proceed in the

Second Place, To shew what those *Ministries* are, which they are *obliged* to render to our Saviour, by virtue of this their Subjection to him: In general it is foretold, that upon their *Subjection* to Christ they should become *Nursing Fathers and Nursing Mothers* to his Church, *Isa.* xlix. 23. that is, that they should tenderly *cherish*, *protect*, and *defend* it, and liberally minister to it whatsoever is necessary for its *Support* and *Preservation*; and to be sure Christ expects of them that they should accomplish this Prediction by doing all those *good Offices* to his Church which the Relation of a *Foster Father* or *Mother* imports: For when God *predicts* any good Thing of Men, it is plain that he would have them *be* what he *foretels* they *shall be*; so that in this Case the *Prophecy* carries *Precept* in it, and doth not only signify what *shall be*, but also what *ought* to be. When therefore God *prophesies* of Kings that they shall be *Nursing Fathers* to his *Church*, he doth as well declare what they *should* be as what they *shall* be; and so he *foretels* of them, and *commands* them in the same Breath. If therefore we would know what those *Ministries* are, which Christ now *requires* Sovereign Powers to render to his *Church*, our best Way will be to inquire what those *Duties* are which are *implied* in the Relation of a *Foster Father* to his *Foster Child*. Now the *Duties* of this Relation may be all of them comprehended under these four Particulars;

First, To *protect* and *defend* it against *Harms* and *Injuries*.

Secondly, To *cultivate* its Manners with good *Precepts* and *Counsels*.

Thirdly, To *correct* and *chasten* its *Faults* and *Irregularities*.

Fourthly, To *supply* it with decent *Raiment* and convenient *Sustenance*: Answerable to which, Sovereign Powers being constituted, by our Saviour, the *Foster Fathers* of his Church, are, by virtue of this Relation, obliged,

I. To *protect* and *defend* it in the Profession and Exercise of the true Religion.

II. To *fence* and *cultivate* its Peace and good Order, either by wholesome *Laws* of their *own*, or by permitting and requiring it to make good *Laws* for *itself*, and, if need be, inforcing them with *Civil Coercions*.

III. To *chasten* and *correct* the irregular and disorderly Members of it.

IV. To make Provision for the *Decency* of its Worship, and for the convenient *Maintenance* of its *Officers* and *Ministers*; which answers to the decent *Raiment* and convenient *Sustenance* with which the *Foster Father* is obliged to supply his *Foster Child*.

These Particulars I shall but very briefly insist on, it being none of my Province to instruct Princes and Governours.

I. One of those *Ministries* which Princes, by virtue of their *Subjection* to Christ, are obliged to render to his Church, is to *protect* and *defend* her in the Profession and Exercise of the *true Religion*, that is, not only to *permit* her openly to *profess* the true Religion, and to *perform* the publick *Offices* of it without Disturbance or Interruption, but also to *fence* her with *legal Securities*, and guard her with the *temporal Sword*, against the Power and Malice of such as would disturb and persecute her; and therefore Sovereign Powers are concerned

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above all Things *impartially* to *inquire*, and *studiously* to *examine* what the *true Religion* is; lest being imposed upon by false Pretences, they *mis-imploy* that Power in the Patronage of *Error* which was given them for the Protection of the *Truth*.

II. Another of those *Ministries* which Princes are *obliged*, by virtue of their *Subjection* to Christ, to render his Church, is to fence and cultivate its *Peace* and *good Order*, either by wholsome Laws of their *own*, or by permitting and requiring it when occasion requires, to make good Laws for *itself*, and if need be, by inforcing them with *civil Coercions*; for so when the Church was either broken by *Schisms*, or corrupted by *Errors* and *disorderly Customs*, it was always the Practice of Christian *Kings* and *Emperours*, even from the Time that they became Christians, to *restrain* and give a *Check* to those *Divisions* and *Disorders*, either by their *own* Royal and Imperial *Edicts*, or by *convening* the Ecclesiastical Governours to Councils, there to consult and agree upon such good *Laws* and *Expedients* as the present Necessities of the Church required; and because these Laws being grounded upon more *spiritual Authority* could as such be inforced by no other *Penalties* than *spiritual*, which by bold and obstinate Offenders were frequently *despised* and *disregarded*, therefore those holy *Kings* and *Emperours* thought themselves *obliged*, as they were the *Ministers* of Jesus, to strengthen and reinforce them with *temporal Sanctions* and *Penalties*, by which means they became the *Laws* of the *Empire*, as well as of the *Church*: Of all which I have given sufficient Instances, and all this was no more than what they were *obliged* to by virtue of their *Subjection* to Christ; for being *subjected* to him they are his *Viceroys* in the World, and do reign and govern by *his* Authority; and since *their* Authority is *his*, they must be accountable to him, if they do not imploy it *for* him in ministring to the Necessities of *his Church* and *Kingdom*; and therefore if when it is in their Power to check a prevailing *Schism* or *Corruption* in the Church by wholsome *Laws* and *Edicts*, they refuse or neglect to do it, they must doubtless answer to him from whom they received their Power, and who being himself the *supreme Head* of the Church, hath constituted them its *Guardians* and *Nursing-Fathers*.

III. Another of those *Ministries*, which Princes are *obliged* to render his Church, is to chasten and correct the irregular and disorderly Members of it for though there are Spiritual Rods and Corrections which Christ hath solely committed to the Spiritual Government, and which, if Men understood and considered the dire Effects and Consequences of them, are sufficient to restrain and keep in awe the most obstinate Offenders, yet when Men are stupified in Sin, and do feel nothing but only what pains or pleases their Bodies, these Spiritual Corrections are insignificant to them, they being such as make no Impression on their corporeal Senses; and so when Men are hardened in *Schism* or *Heresie*, to be sure they will despise the Ecclesiastical Rods, as being confidently persuaded that they cannot be justly apply'd to them, and that where they are apply'd unjustly, they are only so many Spiritual Scare-crows that can only threaten, but not hurt them; and therefore in these Cases the Secular Powers are obliged, by virtue of their Subjection to Jesus, to *second* the *Spiritual* with the Temporal Rod, and to awe such Offenders with corporeal Corrections as are fearless and insensible of the Censures of the Church. And conformable hereunto hath been the constant Practice of all good Kings and Emperours, even from their first Conversion to Christianity, as might easily be demonstrated by innumerable Instances out of Ecclesiastical History; for they not only made Laws inforc'd with *temporal* Penalties for the Regulation of the *Clergy*, as well as *Laity*, not only commanded and obliged their *Bishops* in case of notorious Neglect, to execute the Church Censures on the schismatical, heretical and disorderly of both Sorts; but when they found those *spiritual* Executions *ineffectual*, they very often *seconded* them with *temporal*, such as pecuniary Mulcts, Imprisonments and Banishments; and though in the Case of *Error* and *false Belief*, they were always very tender and gentle,

yet whenever they found Men *busily propagating* their *Errors* into *Sects* and *Divisions*, to the Disturbances of the Church's Peace, they thought themselves obliged to restrain their Petulancy with *temporal Chastisements.* And indeed as they are the Vice-roys of our Saviour, they are *ex Officio* the Conservators of the Peace of his Kingdom, and stand *obliged* to exert that Authority he hath devolved upon them in the Defence of its *Unity* and *good Order*, which in many Cases they can no otherwise do, but only by restraining the Schismatical and Disorderly with the Terror of *temporal Corrections*; so that as well in the Church as in the Civil State they are the *Ministers of God to us for our good*; and therefore if we *do that which is evil*, we have just Cause to *be afraid, for they bear not the Sword in vain, for they are the Ministers of God, Revengers to execute Wrath upon them that do Evil*, Rom. xiii. 14.

IV. And *lastly*, Another of those *Ministries* which Princes are *obliged* to render to Christ's Church, by virtue of their Subjection to him, is to make *good Provision* for the *Decency* of its Worship, and for the *convenient Maintenance* of its Officers and Ministers; to take care that it hath decent and commodious *Places* set apart for the publick Celebration of its Worship, and that those *Places* be supplied with such *Ornaments* and *Accommodations* as are suitable to those *venerable Solemnities* that are to be performed in them; that so its Worship may not be exposed to *Contempt* by the *Slovenliness* and *Barbarity* of its outward Appendages; and this is the *clothing* of the Church, which as it ought not on the one hand to be too *pompous* and *gaudy*, that being naturally apt to *distract* and *carnalize* the Minds of its Votaries, and to *divert* their Attention from those *spiritual* Exercises, wherein the *Life* and *Soul* of its Worship consists; so neither ought it on the other hand to be *sordid* and *nasty*, that being as naturally apt to *prejudice* and *distaste* Men against it, and to create in their Minds a *loathing* and *contempt* of it. Now the furnishing the Church with such decent *Places* and *Ornaments* of Worship, as do *become* the grave Solemnities of a *spirital Religion*, being a matter of Cost and Charge, must necessarily belong to the *Civil* Powers, who alone can lay Rates upon the Subject, and have the sole Command and Disposal of the *Publick Purse*; and therefore, by virtue of their *Subjection* to Christ, they are *obliged* to take care that such religious *Places* and *Ornaments* be provided as the *Decency* and *Convenience* of his Worship do require. And then as for the *Ministers* and *Officers* of his Church, they are under the *same Obligation* to take care, that they whose Office it is to *serve at the Altar*, *should live upon the Altar*; and that according to the different Stations and Degrees wherein they are placed, that so they may neither be *necessitated* for a Subsistence to involve themselves in *secular Affairs*, and thereby to neglect their *spiritual Calling*, which is Burthen enough of all Conscience for any *one* Man's Shoulders; nor be tempted to *base Compliances* with the Lusts of Men, and the Iniquities of Times for a Maintenance; and that so Religion itself may not be exposed to *Contempt* through their wretched *Poverty* and *Indigence* who are the Ministers of it, and who for want of a fair and honourable *Subsistence* can never obtain *Credit* and *Authority* enough to do any considerable Good in the World. And this is the *Food* and *Sustenance* of the Church, without which it cannot long flourish either in true *Knowledge*, or true *Piety*, but must insensibly whither away, and degenerate into *Barbarity* and *Ignorance.* And accordingly, if you consult Ecclesiastical History, you will find that it was ever the Practice of *Pious* Princes and Emperours to take care both for the erecting of *decent* and *convenient Churches* in all Parts of their Dominions for the Celebration of Divine Worship, and to furnish them with all the *decent Accommodations* and *Ornaments* that were proper thereunto, and also for the endowing the Bishops and Pastors of the Church with such *honourable Subsistences* as becomes the Port and Dignity of their several *Orders* and *Offices*; in which they did no more than what they stood *obliged* to, as they were the *Vice-Roys* of Jesus, and the *Foster-Fathers* of his Church, by virtue of which Relation to it, they are bound in *Duty* to

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ſupply it with decent *Raiment* and convenient *Food.* And now having explained the *Subjection* of the Sovereign Powers of the Earth to our Lord and Saviour, and ſhewn *what* thoſe *Miniſtries* are, which they are *obliged* to render to him in his Kingdom, I proceed to the

Fourth and *laſt* Sort of his *Miniſters*, by which he governs his Kingdom, *viz.* the *Spiritual* or *Eccleſiaſtical Governours*, in treating of which I ſhall endeavour theſe three Things:

Firſt, To ſhew that Chriſt hath erected a *Spiritual Government* to Miniſter to him in his Church.

Secondly, To ſhew in what Hands this *Spiritual Government* is placed.

Thirdly, To ſhew what are the proper *Miniſtries* of this *Epiſcopal Government.*

I. That Chriſt hath erected a *Spiritual Government* in his Church. And indeed ſuppoſing the Church to be a *regular* and *formal* Society, ſubſiſting of *itſelf*, *diſtinct* from all other Societies, it muſt neceſſarily have a *diſtinct Government* in it; becauſe *Government* is *eſſentially* included in the very Notion of all *regular* Society, which without *Rule* and *Subjection* is not a formed *Society*, but a confuſed *Multitude*; for what elſe do we mean by a *humane Society*, but only ſuch a Company of Men *united* together by ſuch and ſuch *Laws* and *Regulations?* But how can any Company of Men be *united* by *Laws*, without having in it ſome *governing* Power to *rule* by thoſe Laws, and exact *Obedience* to them? So that we may as well ſuppoſe a compleat *Body* without a *Head*, as a *regular Society* without a *Government.* Now that the Church is a *regular Society* utterly *diſtinct* from all Civil-Society, is as evident as the Truth of *Chriſtianity*, which all along declares and recognizes the *Law* or *Covenant*, upon which it is *founded*, and by which it is *united*, to be *Divine*, and conſequently to be *ſuperiour* to, and *independent* upon all *Civil Laws*; and if that which conſtitutes the Church by *Divine* Law, and not *Civil*, then the Conſtitution of the Church muſt be *Divine* and not *Civil*; for that which makes us *Chriſtians*, at the ſame time makes us *Parts* of the Chriſtian *Church*; and that which makes all the *Parts* of the Church, makes the Church *itſelf*; which is nothing but the *whole* or *collection* of *all* the *Parts* together; and therefore as we are not made *Chriſtians*, ſo neither are we made a Chriſtian *Church* by the Laws of the *Common-wealth*, but by the Laws and Conſtitutions of our *Saviour*, which were promulgated to the World long *before* there were any Laws of the *Commonwealth* to found a Chriſtian Church on; for there was a Chriſtian *Church* for Three hundred Years together, *before* ever it had the leaſt Favour or Protection from the Laws of *Nations.* In all which time it ſubſiſted *apart* from all other *Societies*, and was as much a *Church* or *Chriſtian Society* as it is now; and as it is now, it is only a continued *Succeſſion* of *that Primitive Church*, and therefore, as to the Conſtitution of it, muſt neceſſarily be as *diſtinct now* from all other Societies, as it was *then*, when it ſubſiſted not only *apart from* but *againſt* the Laws and Edicts of all other Societies in the World; in ſhort therefore ſince the Church of Chriſt is founded on a *Charter*, and *incorporated* by a *Law* that is utterly *diſtinct* from the Charters and Laws of all *Civil Societies*, it hence neceſſarily follows, that itſelf is a *diſtinct Society* from them all; becauſe that which *individuates* any Society, or makes it a *diſtinct* Body from all other Societies, is the *Charter* or *Law* upon which it is founded; and accordingly our Saviour tells *Pilate*, when he aſked him, whether he was a *King?* That he was a *King*, indeed, but that *his Kingdom was not of this World*, John xviii. 36. *i. e.* tho' my Kingdom be *in this* World, yet is it not *of* the World; for neither are the *Laws* of it *Humane*, but *Divine*; nor the *Powers* of it *external*, but *inviſible*; nor the *Rewards* and *Puniſhments* of it *temporal*, but *ſpiritual* and *eternal.*

From the whole, therefore, theſe two Things are evident;

Firſt, That *Government* is *Eſſential* to *formed* and *regular Societies.*

Secondly, That the Church of Chriſt is in the *Nature* and *Conſtitution* of it a *formed* and *regular Society*, *diſtinct* from all other Societies: From both which it neceſſarily followeth, that it muſt have a *diſtinct Government* included

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in the very *Essence* and *Being* of it. And accordingly in the New Testament besides the *Civil* Magistrates, we frequently read of *Spiritual* and *Ecclesiastical* Governours; so *Heb.* xiii. 17. there is mention made of the Rulers that *watch for our Souls*, and a strict Injunction to *obey* and *submit ourselves to them*; and so again in the 7th and 24th Verses, and in 1 *Tim.* v. 17. the Apostle speaks of *the Elders that rule well*, who are to be *accounted worthy of double Honour.* And indeed the *Greek* Word ἐπίσκοπος, which signifies a *Bishop* or *Overseer*, doth in Scripture always import a *Ruler* or *Governour*; vide *Hammond*, Acts i. Note 1. and therefore being apply'd, as it is frequently in the New Testament, to a certain *Order* of Men in the Christian Church, it must necessarily denote them to be the *Rulers* and *Governours* of it; and this Power to ἐπισκοπεῖν, *i. e. oversee*, and *rule* and *govern* the Church, was derived to them from Christ the *supreme Bishop* of our Souls, even by that Commission he gave them, *John* xx. 21. *As the Father hath sent me, so send I you*, i. e. so I commission you with the *same* Authority in kind to *teach* and *govern* in my Kingdom, as I myself have received from the Father; and accordingly, as Christ is called the *Pastor* or *Shepherd*, which Nature imports Authority to *govern* his Flock (for so to *feed* and to *rule* are of the same Significancy in *Psalm* lxxviii. 72. and *Philo* tells us οἱ γ̀ ποιμαίνοντες ἀρχόντων κ̀ ἡγεμόνων ἔχοντες δύναμιν. *i. e.* that the Name of *Shepherds* implied *ruling* and *governing* Power) so they who were sent and commission'd by our Saviour, are styl'd ἐπισκόπους ἐν ποιμνίῳ, the *Bishops* and *Overseers* or *Shepherds in the Flock to feed the Church of* God, Acts xx. 28. and they are elsewhere commanded to *feed the Flock of God, and to take the Oversight thereof*, 1 Pet. v. 2. And as they are called the *Shepherds* of Christ's Flock, so they are also the *Stewards* of his Family, and as such they are constituted by him *the Rulers of his Houshold, to give them their due Portion of Meat in due Season*, Luke xii. 42. and elsewhere they are called *Governments* or Governours, (the *Abstract*, as it is very usual in Scripture, being put for the *Concrete)* 1 *Cor.* xii. 28. and their *Authority* is said to be *given from the Lord*, 2 Cor. x. 8. and they are said to be our *Rulers in the Lord*, i. e. by the Lord's Commission and Authority, 1 *Thes.* v. 12. and as such they are commanded to *rule with Diligence*, Rom. xii. 8. from all which it is abundantly evident, that the *Church* of Christ is a *formed Society* subsisting of itself, *distinct* from all other Societies, under a *distinct Rule* and *Government.* But this I shall make yet more fully appear, when I come to treat of the several *Ministries* which the Governours of the Church of Christ are *obliged* to render him.

I proceed therefore at present to the Second Thing proposed, which was to inquire into the *Nature* of *this Government, in what Hands Christ hath placed it. Now the two main Rival Forms of Church-Government pretending to Divine Institution, are the Presbyterial and Episcopal; the Presbyterial is that which is seated in an Equality or Parity of Church-Officers; the Episcopal is that which is placed in a superiour Order of Church-Officers, called Bishops; to whom the other Order of Presbyters and Deacons are subject and subordinate: the latter of which, I shall endeavour to prove, is the true Form of Government instituted by our Saviour*, and that

First, From the *Institution* of our Saviour.

Secondly, From the Practice of the Holy Apostles.

Thirdly, From the punctual Conformity of the *Primitive* Church to both.

Fourthly, From our *Saviour*'s declared *Allowance* and *Approbation* of the Primitive *Practice* in this Matter.

I. That the *Government* of the Church of Christ is *Episcopal*, is evident from the *Institution* of our *Saviour*, who, in his Life-time instituted two *distinct Orders* of Ecclesiastical Ministers, the one superiour to the other, *viz.* that of the Twelve *Apostles*, and that of the Seventy or Seventy-two *Disciples*; for that these Two were of *distinct Orders*, is evident from their being always distinguished from one another, and mentioned apart by different *Names* and in different *Ranks* and *Classes*; for to what purpose should the Scripture mention the Twelve and the Seventy so *distinctly* as it every where doth, if there

were not some Distinction in their *Office* and *Employment*; for in *Luke* vi. 13. we are told, that Christ *called unto him his Disciples, and of them he chose Twelve, whom also he named Apostles*, and *Mark* iii. 13, 14. it is said, that *he called unto him whom he would*, that is of his Disciples, *and ordained Twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send 'em forth to preach*; and what less can this imply, than that the Twelve were separated by this *Call* and *Ordination* of Christ to some distinct Office and Employment from the rest of his Disciples? And that the Office of the *Twelve*, was *superior* to that of the *Seventy*, is evident not only from their being still placed *first* in the Catalogues of Ecclesiastical Officers, see *Eph.* iv. 11. 1 *Cor.* xii. 28. in the latter of which we are told that *God constituted in the Church first Apostles*, wherein the *Primacy* is attributed to the *Apostolical* Office; and not only from the *particular* Care which Christ took of these Twelve above the rest of his Disciples both in praying for and instructing them, of which there are a great many notorious Instances in the Gospels; but also from hence, that their immediate *Successors* were for the most Part *chosen* out of the Seventy; for so *Simeon* the Son of *Cleophas* succeeded St. *James* at *Jerusalem*; *Philip*, St. *Paul* at *Cæsarea*; *Clement*, St. *Peter* at *Rome*; and divers others of the Seventy, according to *Dorotheus*, *Eusebius* and others of the Fathers, *succeeded* the Apostles after their Death in the Government of their several Churches; and *Matthias*, who, as *Eusebius*, *Epiphanius* and S. *Jerome* affirm, was one of the Seventy that was *chosen* and *ordained* by the other Apostles to *succeed Judas* in the Apostolate, *Acts* i. 26. from whence it is evident, that the Apostles were *superior* to the Seventy, otherwise it would have been no *Advancement* to the Seventy to *succeed* 'em; for all that *Superiority* which they acquired by their *Succession*, must necessarily be *inherent* in the *Apostles* before they succeeded 'em; else how can they be said to succeed 'em in it? And if we suppose 'em to be *equal* with the Apostles in *Office* before they succeeded 'em, it is Nonsense to say, they *succeeded* 'em; for how can a Man be said to *succeed another* in any *Office*, who is actually vested with the *same Office*, before he succeeds him; if therefore the Seventy received no *more* Power *after* the Apostles, than they had under 'em, they were *as much* Apostles *before* they succeeded 'em, as *after*; but if they did receive *more* Power, then the *Apostles* to whom they succeeded had *more* Power than *they* before they received it, and consequently were *their Superiors*; because a Man can *receive* no more Power by *succeeding* another in any *Office*, than he to whom he succeeds had before, by virtue of the *same Office*. By all which it is most evident, that by the *Institution* of our Saviour, the *Apostles* were *superior* to the *Seventy*, and yet it is as evident that the Seventy were *Ecclesiastical Ministers*, as well as they; for in *Luke* x. 1. we are told, that *after these Things the Lord appointed other Seventy also, and sent 'em two and two before his Face*, that is, to preach his Gospel; and that by this Mission of his they were *authorized* to be the *Ministers* of Religion, is evident from what he tells 'em, *verse* 16. *He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me*; from whence it is plain, that they were his *authorized Ministers*, even as he was *God's*; because as the despising of *him* was a despising of *God*, by whom he was sent; so the despising of *them* was a despising of *Christ*, by whom *they* were sent; and accordingly by virtue of this Mission we find 'em acting as *authorized Ministers* of the Gospel; for so *Ananias*, who was one of 'em, baptized *Saul*, Acts ix. 18. and *Philip*, who was another, preached and baptized at *Samaria*, Acts viii. 5.

So that here are plainly *two* Sorts of Ecclesiastical *Officers*, the one superior to the other, of our Saviour's *own Institution* and *Appointment*; and therefore if *his Institution* be still valid, there must still be a *Superiority* and *Subordination* between the Officers and Ministers of his Church, and consequently the Government thereof must still be *Episcopal*, *i. e.* by some *superior Officers* presiding and super-intending over other inferior *ones*. I know it is objected that *this Superiority* of the Apostles over the Seventy was only in *Office*, but not in *Power*

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or *Jurisdiction*; but since it is the *Office* that is the immediate Subject of the *Power* belonging to it, I would fain know, whether superiority of *Office* must not necessarily include superiority in *Power*; for *Office* without *Power* is an empty Name that signifies nothing; and every Degree of superiority of *Office*, must be accompanied with *Power* to exert itself in *Acts* of Superiority; otherwise 'twill be utterly in vain and to no purpose. So that either the *Superiority* of the Apostolick Office over *other* Church-Offices, must be void and insignificant, or it must have a proportionable Superiority of *Power* over them, inseparably *inherent* in it. But it is farther objected, that supposing the Apostolate to be *superior* to the other Ecclesiastical Orders in *Power* and *Office*, yet it was but *temporary*, it being instituted by our Saviour in subservience to the *present Exigence* and *Necessity* of Things, without any Intention of deriving it down to the Church in a continued *Succession*. To which I answer in short, that this is said without so much as a plausible Colour of Reason; for they allow both that our Saviour *instituted* this Office, and that in his Institution he never gave the least Intimation to the World, that he *intended* it only for a *certain Season*. Now if Men will presume to declare Christ's *Institutions Temporary*, without the *least Intimation* of his Will, that he so designed them, they may with the *same* Warrant repeal *all* the *Institutions* of Christianity; and even the two *Sacraments* will lie as much at their Mercy as the Institution of the *Apostolick Order*, which unless they can prove it repealed by the *same* Authority which established it, will be sufficient to prescribe to all *Ages* and *Nations*; for the *Obligations* of divine Commands are *dissolvable* only by divine *Countermands*; and for *Men* to declare any divine Institution void before *God* hath so declared it, is to *over-rule* the Will of *God* by their own arrogant *Presumptions*; for though the *Matter* of the Institution be mutable in *itself*, yet the *Form* and *Obligation* of it is mutable only by the *Authority* which *made* it; and therefore though God hath not declared that he instituted it for *perpetuity*, yet till he declares the *contrary*, it must bind for perpetuity; especially if the *Reason* of the Institution of it be not apparently *altered*, which cannot be pretended in the Case under Debate, there being the very *same Reasons* for a *Superiority* and *Subordination* between Ecclesiastick Officers *now*, as there was when our Saviour *first appointed* and *instituted* it. Until therefore they can shew either that the *Reason* of the Institution is *ceased*, or that the Institution *itself* is *repeal'd* by some other Law, neither of which was ever yet pretended, they may as reasonably dispense with most of the *Precepts* of the Gospel (which are no more declared *perpetual* than *this*) as with this of *Superiority* and *Subjection* among the Ecclesiastical Orders, which is the proper Form of the Episcopal Government.

II. That the true Government of the Church is *Episcopal*, is evident also from the *Practice* of the holy *Apostles*, who, pursuant to the Institution of our Saviour, did not only *exercise* that *Superiority* in their *own* Persons, which their Office gave them over their inferior Clergy, but also *derived* it down with their Office to their *Successors*, which is a plain Argument that they looked upon our Saviour's Institution of this superior Office of the Apostolate, not as a *temporary Expedient*, but as a *standing Form* of Ecclesiastical Government, to be handed down to all *succeeding Generations*; for though, during our Saviour's Abode upon Earth, and some Time after his Ascension into Heaven, the Number of the Apostles was confin'd to *Twelve*, yet when afterwards, through their Ministry, the Church was spread and dilated, not only through *Judæa*, but into the *Gentile* Nations, they added to their Number several *other Apostles* to whom they communicated the *same Office* and *Degree* of *Superiority* over the other Clergy, that our blessed Saviour had communicated to *them*; for so *Eusebius, lib.* 1. *cap.* 11. εἶθ᾽ ὡς παρὰ τούτους καὶ μίμησιν τῶν δώδεκα πλείστων ὅσων ὑπαρξάντων Ἀποστόλων, *i. e.* besides the Twelve there were many *other Apostles* in that Age, after the Similitude of the *Twelve*; and of the Truth of this I shall give three or four Instances.

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The first is that of St. *James* of *Jerusalem*, the Brother of *Jesus*, who though he was none of the *Twelve*, (for in that Number there were but two *James's*, *viz.* the Son of *Alpheus*, and the Son of *Zebedee*, neither of which was he, whom St. *Paul* calls the *Lord's Brother*, and St. *Paul* reckons him apart from the Twelve, 1 *Cor.* xv. 5, 6, 7.) is yet styled an Apostle by St. *Paul*, Gal. i. 19. but *other Apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's Brother.* And St. *Jerome*, in his Comment on *Isaiah*, styles *James* the *thirteenth Apostle*; that is, the first that was made an Apostle after the Twelve; and that he was not merely a *nominal* Apostle, but *actually* endowed with Apostolical *Power* and *Superiority*, is evident both from *Scripture* and the unanimous Consent of Ecclesiastical *History*: From *Scripture* it is evident, that this *James* was a Man of great Eminence in the Church of *Jerusalem*; for in the first Council that was held there we find him giving a decisive Sentence in the Matter of Circumcision, *Acts* xv. For after there had been *much disputing*, ver. 7. and St. *Peter*, and St. *Paul*, and St. *Barnabas* had declared their Judgment in the Case, *ver.* 7, 13. St. *James*, after a short Preface, thus delivers himself, *Wherefore my Sentence is, that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles are turned unto God*; and this Sentence of his determines the Controversy, and puts a final End to all farther Debate; which plainly argues his great Authority and Preheminence in that Place. Again, *Acts* xxi. 17, 18. we are told, that when St. *Paul* and his Company *were come to Jerusalem, the Brethren received him gladly*; *and that the next Day following Paul went in with them unto James, and all the Elders were present.* Now for what other Reason should *Paul* go in to *James* more especially, or upon what other Account should all the Elders be present with *James*, but that he was a Person of the *greatest Note* and *Figure* in the Church of *Jerusalem*? And for the same Reason, in all probability, St. *Paul* mentions *James* before *Peter* and *John*, discoursing of a Meeting he had with them at *Jerusalem*, Gal. ii. 9. because though *Peter* and *John* were two of the principal of the twelve Apostles, and St. *James* was not so much as one of that Number, yet in the Church of *Jerusalem* he had the *Priority* of them *both*: Now considering that St. *James* is called an *Apostle*, and considering the *Preference* he had in all these Instances *above* the other Apostles at *Jerusalem*, it is at least highly *probable* that he was *peculiarly* the Apostle of the Church of *Jerusalem*: But if to all this Evidence we add the most early Testimonies of Christian Antiquity, we shall advance the *Probability* to a *Demonstration*; for by the unanimous Consent of all Ecclesiastical Writers, St. *James* was the first Bishop of *Jerusalem*; for so *Hegesippus*, who lived very near the Times of the Apostles, tells us, that *James* the Brother of our Lord, called by all Men the *Just*, received the Church of *Jerusalem* from the Apostles, *vid. Euseb. lib.* ii. *cap.* 23. So also St. *Clement*, as he is quoted by the same Author, *l.* ii. *c.* 1. tells us, that *Peter*, *James* and *John*, after the Assumption of Christ, as being the Men that were most in favour with him, did not contend for the Honour, but chose *James* the Just to be Bishop of *Jerusalem*; and in the *Apostolical Constitutions* that pass under the Name of St. *Clement*, (which though not so ancient as is pretended, yet are doubtless of very early Antiquity) the Apostles are brought in thus speaking, *Concerning those that were ordained by us Bishops in our Life-time, we signify to you that they were these,* James *the Brother of our Lord was ordained by us Bishop of* Jerusalem, &c. so also St. *Jerom. de Script. Eccles.* tells us, that St. *James*, immediately after the Passion of our Lord, was ordained Bishop of *Jerusalem* by the *Apostles*. And St. *Cyril*, who was afterwards Bishop of that Church, and therefore a most authentick Witness of the Records of it, calls St. *James the first Bishop of that Diocese, Catech.* 16. To all which we have the concurrent Testimonies of St. *Austin*, St. *Chrysostom*, *Epiphanius*, St. *Ambrose*, and a great many others; and St. *Ignatius* himself, who was an *immediate Disciple* of the Apostles, makes St. *Stephen* to be a Deacon of St. *James*, *Ep. ad Trall.* and therefore since *Stephen* was a Deacon of the Church of *Jerusalem*, St. *James*, whose Deacon he was, must necessarily be the Bishop of it.

Upon this Account therefore St. *James* is called an *Apostle* in Scripture; because by being ordained by the Apostles Bishop of *Jerusalem*, he had the *Apostolick Power* and *Authority* conferr'd on him; for since it is apparent he was none of the Twelve, to whom the Apostleship was at *first* confined, he could no otherwise become an *Apostle*, than by deriving the Apostleship from some of the *Twelve*; and therefore since that Apostleship which he derived from the Twelve was only *Episcopal Superiority* over the Church of *Jerusalem*, it hence necessarily follows, that the *Episcopacy* was the *Apostleship* derived and communicated from the primitive Apostles.

The second Instance of the Apostles communicating their apostolick Superiority to others, is *Epaphroditus*, who, in *Phil.* ii. 25. is styled the *Apostle* of the *Philippians*: *But I suppose it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my Brother and Companion in Labour, and Fellow-Soldier*, ὑμῶν δὲ Ἀπόστολον, *but your Apostle*; for so St. *Jerome Com.* Gal. i. 19. *Paulatim tempore procedente & alii ab his quos Dominus elegerat ordinati sunt Apostoli, sicut ille ad Philippenses sermo declarat, dicens, Necessarium existimavi Epaphroditum*, &c. *i. e.* by degrees, in process of Time, *others* were ordained *Apostles*, by those whom our Lord had chosen, as that Passage to the *Philippians* shews, *I thought it necessary to send unto you Epaphroditus your Apostle*. And *Theodoret* upon the Place gives this Reason why he is here called the *Apostle* of the *Philippians*; τὴν ἐπισκοπικὴν οἰκονομίαν ἐπεπίστευτο, ἔχων ἐπισκόπου προσηγορίαν, *i. e.* he was intrusted with Episcopal Government, as being their Bishop: So that here you see *Epaphroditus* is made an Apostle by the Apostles, and his *Apostleship* consists in being made *Bishop* of *Philippi*.

A third Instance is that of *Titus*, and some others with him, 2 *Cor.* viii. 23. *Whether any do inquire of Titus, he is my Partner and Fellow-helper concerning you: or our Brethren be inquired of, they are* Ἀπόστολοι ἐκκλησιῶν, *the Apostles of the Churches, and the Glory of Christ*; where it is plain, they are not called the *Apostles of the Churches*, merely as they were the Messengers of the Liberality of the Churches of *Macedonia*; for it was not those *Churches*, but St. *Paul* that sent them, *ver.* 22. and therefore since they were not *Apostles* in relation to those *Churches* whose Liberality they carried, it must be in relation to some *particular* Churches over which they had *Apostolical Authority*; and that *Titus* had this Authority over the Church of *Crete*, is evident both from St *Paul's* Epistle to him, and from primitive Antiquity: As for St. *Paul*'s Epistle, there are sundry Passages in it, which plainly speak him to be vested with Apostolical Superiority over that Church; so *chap.* i. *ver.* 5. *For this Cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set Things in order that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every City as I have appointed thee.* For in the first Place, St. *Paul* here gives him the *supreme* Judgment of Things that were wanting, with an *absolute* Power to *reform* and *correct* them; which is a plain Demonstration of his *Superiority* in that Church. *Secondly*, He authorizes him to *ordain Elders in every City*, and whether these Elders were *Bishops* or *Presbyters* is of very little Consequence as to the present Debate, for first, it is of undoubted Certainty, that there were Presbyters in the Church of *Crete*, before *Titus* was left there by the Apostle; and secondly, it is as evident, that those Presbyters had no Power to *ordain Elders in every City*, as *Titus* had; for if they had, what need St. *Paul* to have left *Titus* there for that Purpose? What need he have left *Titus* there with a *new Power* to do that which the *Presbyters* before him had sufficient Power to do? For if the *Presbyters* had before the Power of *Ordination* in them, this *new* Power of *Titus*'s would have been not only in *vain*, but *mischievous*; it would have look'd like an *Invasion* of the Power of the *Presbyters*, for St. *Paul* to restrain Ordination to *Titus*, if before him it had been common to the *whole Presbytery*; and upon that Account have rather proved an occasion of *Strife* and *Contention*, than an expedient of *Peace* and *good Order*. From hence therefore it is evident, that *Titus* had a *Power* in the Church of *Crete* which the *Presbyters* there before him *had not*; and this Power of his extended not only to the Establishment of *good Order* and the *Ordaining* of Elders, but also to *rebuking with all*

Authority, *i. e.* correcting obstinate Offenders with the Spiritual Rod of Excommunication, *Chap.* ii. *ver.* 15. and taking Cognizance of heretical Pravity, so as first *to admonish Hereticks*, and in Case of Pertinacy to *reject* them from the Communion of the Church, *Chap.* iii. *ver.* 10. from all which it is evident, that this *Apostolate* of *Titus*, consisted in his Ecclesiastical *Superiority*, which was the very *same* in the Church of *Crete*, that the first Apostles themselves had in the several Churches that were planted by them. And accordingly he is declared, by the concurrent Testimony of all Antiquity, to be the *first* Bishop of that Church; so *Euseb. Lib* 3. *cap.* 4 affirms him, τ' ἐπὶ Κρήτης ἐκκλησιῶν ἐπισκοπὴν εἰληχέναι, to have received Episcopal Authority over the Churches of *Crete*. So also *Theodoret*, in *Argum. Ep. ad Tit.* tells us, that he was ordained by St. *Paul* Bishop of *Crete*, and so also St. *Chrysostom*, St. *Jerom*, and St. *Ambrose*, and several others of the Fathers and Ecclesiastical Writers. This Episcopal Authority therefore which St. *Paul* gave *Titus* over the Church of *Crete*, is another plain Instance of the Apostles making Apostles, or deriving to *others* their *Apostolick Power* and *Superiority* over particular Churches.

The *Fourth* and *last* Instance I shall give, is that of *Timothy*, who, as it appears by St. *Paul*'s Epistles to him, had *Episcopal* Authority over the Church of *Ephesus*; and this not only over the *Laity* to *command and teach them*, 1 Tim. iv. 11. to receive Widows into the Church's Service, or reject and refuse them, 1 *Tim.* v. 4, 9, 16. and to oblige the Women to go modestly in their Apparel, and keep Silence in the Church, 1 *Tim.* ii. 11, 12. but also over the *Clergy*, to take care that suitable Provision should be made for them, 1 *Tim.* v. 17. that none should be admitted a Deacon till after competent Trial, nor ordained an Elder, till after he had well acquitted himself in the Deaconship, 1 *Tim.* iii. 10, 13. to exercise Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction over them, to receive Accusations against them, and if he found them guilty to put them to open Shame, 1 *Tim.* v. 19, 20. and St. *Paul* charges him to exercise this his Jurisdiction, *without preferring one before another, and without partiality*, ibid. *ver.* 21. which if he had no Jurisdiction over them, had been very impertinent; and as he had Jurisdiction over the *Clergy concredited* to him, so had he also the Authority of *ordaining* them; for the due Exercise of which, St. *Paul* gives him that necessary Rule, 1 *Tim.* v. 22. *Lay Hands suddenly on no Man, neither be partaker of other Mens Sins.* And that this *Authority* of his in the *Ephesian* Church, over both the *Laity* and *Clergy*, was given him by St. *Paul* for a *standing Form* of *Government* there, is evident from hence, because it was conferred on him after the *Presbytery* was formed and settled in that Church; for in planting and cultivating this *large* and *populous Church*, which extended it self over all the Proconsular *Asia*, St. *Paul* had laboured for three Years together with incredible Diligence; which is a much longer Time than he spent in any other Church; and therefore by this Time to be sure he had not only *constituted* a *Presbytery*, in it, as he did in all other Churches, *Acts* xiv. 23. but also reduced it to much greater *Perfection* than any other, that so in the *Constitution* of it, it might be a Pattern to all other Churches; and if so, then to be sure the Government which he had *now* at last *established* in it, was such as he intended should *continue*, *viz.* by a *single Person* presiding over both *Clergy* and *Laity*. And that *de facto* it was so, we have not only the Authority of St. *Paul*'s Epistles to *Timothy*, but also the concurrent Testimony of all Ecclesiastical Antiquity; for so *Euseb. Eccles. Hist. Lib.* iii. *cap.* 4. tells us, *he was the first Bishop of the Province* or Diocese of *Ephesus*, and the anonymous Author of his Life in *Photius*; that *he was the first that acted as Bishop in* Ephesus, and that *he was ordained and enthroned Bishop of the Metropolis of* Ephesus, *by the great St.* Paul; and in the Council of *Chalcedon* Twenty-seven Bishops are said to have succeeded in that Chair from *Timothy*; who was the first; and St. *Chrysostom*, Hom. 15. in 1 *Tim.* v. 19. tells us, *that it is manifest*, Timothy *was intrusted with a Church, or rather with a whole Nation*, viz. *that of* Asia, upon which account he is styled by *Theodoret*, 1 *Tim.* iii. 1. Ἀσιανῶν Ἀπόστολος Τιμόθεος,

Timothy

Timothy the Apostle of the *Asiatiques*, and to name no more of the great Numbers of Authorities that might be cited in the *Apostolick Constitutions* we are expresly told, that he was *ordained Bishop* of *Ephesus* by St. *Paul*. This therefore is *another* evident Instance of the Apostles *deriving* down their *Apostolick* Authority. Other Instances might be given, but these are sufficient to shew, that the *Apostles* did not look upon our Saviour's *Institution* of a *superiour* Order of Ecclesiastical Officers, as a *temporary* thing that was to expire with them, but as a *standing Model of Ecclesiastical Government*, since they derived to *others* that *Superiority* over the Churches of Christ, which he communicated to *them*. For from all these Instances it is most evident, both that the *Apostolical Office* did not expire with the Twelve, but was *transferred* by them to *others*, and that that which is now called the *Episcopacy*, was nothing else but the *Apostolical Office* derived from the *Apostles* to their Successors; for in the Primitive Language of the Church, *Bishops* are generally styled *Apostles*; for which no other Reason can be *assigned*, but that they *succeeded* in the *Apostolical Superiority*. Thus, as hath been shewn before, St. *James*, *Epaphroditus*, *Titus*, and *Timothy* are styled *Apostles* in Scripture, and by the Primitive Writers; *Clemens* Bishop of *Rome*, who was a Disciple of the Apostles, is called Ἀπόστολος Κλήμης, i. e. *Clemens* the Apostle, vide *Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib.* iv. and *Ignatius* Bishop of *Antioch*, Ἀπόστολος καὶ Ἐπίσκοπος, Apostle and Bishop by St. *Chrysostom*; and *Thaddæus*, who was sent by St. *Thomas* to the Prince of *Edessa*, Ἀπόστολος Θαδδαῖος, by *Eusebius*, and so are also St. *Mark* and St. *Luke* by *Epiphanius*; and *Theodoret* lays it down for a general Rule, τοὺς δὲ νῦν καλουμένους ἐπισκόπους, Ἀποστόλους ὠνόμαζον. τοῦ δὲ χρόνου προϊόντος τὸ μὲν τῆς Ἀποστολῆς ὄνομα τοῖς ἀληθῶς Ἀποστόλοις κατέλιπον. τὴν δὲ τῆς Ἐπισκοπῆς προσηγορίαν τοῖς πάλαι καλουμένοις Ἀποστόλοις ἐπέθεσαν, *i. e.* those whom we now call *Bishops*, were anciently call'd *Apostles*; but in process of Time the Name of *Apostle* was left to them who were more *strictly* Apostles, *(viz.* the *Twelve)* and the Name of *Bishop* was restrained to those who were anciently called *Apostles*. If therefore the Practice of the Apostles, proceeding upon the express *Institution* of our *Saviour*, be sufficient to found a *Divine Right*, we have this you see to plead for a *Superiority* and *Subordination* of Ecclesiastical Offices; since the *Apostles* did not only ordain *Presbyters* and *Deacons* in the several Churches they planted, but also *Apostles* or *Bishops* to preside over them; and if their Ordaining of *Presbyters* be an Argument of the *perpetuity* of the Office of a *Presbyter* (as the *Presbyterians* themselves contend it is) why should not their Ordaining *Bishops* also be as good an Argument of the *perpetuity* of the Office of a *Bishop*? If *either* be perpetual, why not *both*? if not *both*, why *either*? And how can we argue a perpetual *Power of Ordination* in the Church, from the Ordination of *Timothy* and *Titus*, for instance, (as the *Presbyterians* do, *vide Jus Divin.* p. 159, 167.) if the Office they were ordained to were not *perpetual*; and if it were *perpetual*, then so is *Episcopacy*, which is in nothing different from that which they exercised in their Churches.

III. That the true *Government* of the Church is *Episcopal*, is evident also from the *Universal* Conformity of the *Primitive* Church thereunto. It is objected by the Adversaries of the *Episcopal* Government, that though our *Saviour* indeed instituted a *superiour Order* of Church Officers, *viz.* his Twelve *Apostles* to preside over the rest, and govern his Church; yet this was an *extraordinary Commission* which he never intended they should *derive* down to the Church as a *perpetual Model* of *Government*, but was limited to the Persons of the *Apostles*, and was to expire with them. Now that it was *not* limited to the Persons of the *Apostles* is evident, since as it hath been shewn before, the Apostles *derived* it to *others*; which they could not have done without *violating* their Trust, and *exceeding* the Bounds of their *Commission*, had it been *appropriated* to their Persons; so that it must be allowed either that they proceeded *irregularly* in *transferring* their Superiority to others; or that their Commission *did* impower them to *transfer* it; and therefore if it appear not only that they *might transfer* it to *some* for the Government of *some* Churches,

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by virtue of their *Commission* (of which the above-cited Instances are a full Demonstration) but also that they universally *transferred* it to *others* for the Government of all *other* Churches, then it is certain that either they *mistook* the Intent of our Saviour's Commission, or the Intent of it *was* to impower them to transfer it universally as a *standing* and *perpetual* Form of *Ecclesiastical Government*; in short, if they understood the *Intendment* of their *own* Commission (as to be sure they did, being *guided by the Spirit into all Truth)* to be sure they would never have communicated their *Apostolick Superiority* to any, had it not been our Saviour's *Intention*, when he commissioned them, to authorize them so to do; and for the same reason we may be sure, that so far forth as they *did* communicate it, it was our Saviour's Intention that they *should*, now, as was shewn before; to some they did communicate it for the Government of *some Churches*, as to *Timothy* and *Titus* for instance, for the Government of the Churches of *Ephesus* and *Crete*; from whence it is evident that it was our Saviour's Intention, that they should communicate it to *some*; and for the same reason if it be made appear, that they did communicate it *universally* for the Government of *all other* Churches, it will necessarily follow, that it was *our Saviour*'s *Intention* they should communicate it as an *universal Form* of *Church-Government*. Now whether they *did* communicate it *universally* or no, is a Question about Matter of Fact, and as such is decidable only by the Testimony of the most competent *Witnesses*; and the most competent *Witness*, in this Case, is the *Christian Church* in the Ages next succeeding the *Apostles*, which Church attests with one *universal Consent*, the *universal Derivation* of a *superior Order* of Ecclesiastick Officers from the Apostles, to preside over the Churches of Christ. And some Christian Writers we have who were *living* in the very Days of the *Apostles*, and were their immediate *Scholars* and *Disciples*; others again, who lived in *their* Days, and were their *Disciples*, who lived in the *Apostles*; and others who immediately succeeded *these*; from all which we have ample Testimonies of the *continued Succession* of this *superior Order*, even from the *Apostles* to whom our *Saviour* first delivered it. Out of all which I shall only produce some few Instances out of an infinite Number that might be given. Of the *first* sort are St. *Clement* Bishop of *Rome*, and St. *Ignatius* Bishop of *Antioch*. St. *Clement*, who as *Irenæus* tells us, *saw* the *Apostles*, and *conversed familiarly* with them, makes mention in his Epistle to the *Corinthians* of *Three* Orders of Ecclesiastical Officers in this Time, whom he calls *the High Priests, the Priests and the Levites*, which Words can be no otherwise understood than of the *Bishop, Presbyter*, and the *Deacons:* St. *Ignatius*, who was the Disciple of St. *Peter*, and in his Life-time Bishop of *Antioch*, is so *full* and *express* in all those Six Epistles he wrote on the Way to his Martyrdom, for the *Derivation* of this *superiour Order* from the *Apostles*, that the Adversaries of this Order have no other way to evade him but by condemning those Epistles for *Counterfeits*; from which injurious Sentence they have of late been so triumphantly vindicated by a *learned Pen* of our own, that I dare say no Man of Learning for the future will so far expose the Reputation of his *Understanding* and *Modesty*, as to call them in Question again. Now in all these Epistles the holy Martyr not only distinguishes the Clergy into *Bishops, Presbyters* and *Deacons*, but strictly injoins the two *latter*, as well as the *Laicks* to be *dutiful* and *obedient* to the *former*, and particularly in his Epistle to the *Trallians*, *What is the Bishop*, saith he, *but he that hath all Authority and Power? what is the Presbytery, but a sacred Constitution of Counsellors and Assessors to the Bishop? what are the Deacons, but Imitators of Christ, and Ministers to the Bishop, as he was to the Father?* And as he every where enjoins *Obedience* to the *Bishops* as to the *supreme Order* in the Church of Christ, so in the Beginning of his Epistle to the *Philadelphians*, he tells them, that *so many as belong to Christ are united to the Bishop, and that so many as depart from him and his Communion, and associate themselves with the accursed, shall be cut off with them.* And in his Epistle to the *Magnesians*, he tells them, that *it highly became them to obey their Bishop*,

Bishop, and not to contradict him in any thing; for it is a terrible thing to cantradict him, because in so doing, you do not so much despise him who is visible, as the invisible God, who will not be despised; for his Promotion is not from Men, but from God. And several of his cotemporary Bishops he mentions by Name, *viz. Onesimus* Bishop of the *Ephesians*, *Polycarp* of the *Smyrneans*, *Polybius* of the *Trallians*, and *Damas* of the *Magnesians*; and still as he mentions them, he highly commends the Presbyters and Deacons for their *Obedience* to them. So in the Beginning of his Epistle to the *Magnesians*, *having been so happy as to see you by your worthy Bishop* Damas, *and your worthy Presbyters*, viz. Bassus *and* Apollinus, *and* Zotion *your Deacon, whom I cannot but commend for his Obedience to the Bishop and the Presbytery* —— *you ought not to contemn the Youth of your Bishop, but to pay him all Veneration (as I know your holy Presbyters do) according to the Appointment of God the Father.* And in his Epistle to the *Ephesians*, *Let us be careful*, saith he, *that we do not oppose the Bishop, as we would be obedient to God; and if any Man observe the Silence of his Bishop, let him reverence him so much the more; for every one that the Master of the Family appoints to be his Steward, we ought to receive him as the Master himself, and therefore it is evident we ought to respect the Bishop as our Lord himself:* From whence I infer *first*, that at the writing of these Epistles, which was not above eight or nine Years after the Decease of St. *John*, there were *Bishops* every where *constiuted* over the Churches of Christ; for he not only mentions several Churches that had *Bishops* actually *presiding* over them, but declares Bishops to be of *Divine Ordination*, and that they were to be obeyed, κτ̄ γνώμην θεοῦ πατρὸς, according to the Appointment of God the Father, and οὐ πρὸς ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλὰ πρὸς θεὸν ἔχει τ̀ ἀναφορὰν, that they had their Promotion, not from *Men*, but from *God*; and not only so, but in his Epistle to the *Trallians*, he bids them *obey their Bishops*, as *Christ and his Apostles had commanded them*; in which he necessarily supposes *Bishops* to be instituted by *Christ* and his *Apostles*; and then he goes on, *He who is within the Altar*, that is, within the Communion of the Church, *is clean*, ὁ δὲ ἐκτὸς ὢν, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ χωρὶς τοῦ Ἐπισκόπου καὶ τῶν Πρεσβυτέρων καὶ τῶν Διακόνων τι πράσσων, i. e. *He is without the Altar, who does any Thing without the Bishop and Presbyters, and Deacons*; and if any Christian acting without the *Bishop*, &c. was without the *Communion* of the *Church*, then to be sure no *Community* of *Christians* that did so could be esteemed a *Part* or *Member* of the *Church*; and therefore since according to the Doctrine of this *primitive* Age, *Bishops* were a *divine Ordinance*, and were looked upon as *necessary* to the very *Constitution* of *Churches*; we may from hence justly conclude, that there were then no Churches without them. And *secondly*, we may from hence also infer, that since there were *Bishops* in this early *Age* presiding over the Churches of Christ, several of them at least received their *Episcopal Orders immediately* from the Hands of the *Apostles:* For at the Time when these Epistles were written, *Ignatius* himself had been above forty Years Bishop of *Antioch*, at which Time sundry of the *Apostles* were *living*; and therefore considering the singular *Eminence* of the Church of *Antioch*, whereof he was Bishop, as being *immediately* planted by St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*, and that wherein the Disciples of *Jesus* first received the Name of *Christians*; and considering also that it was the constant Practice of the Apostles to ordain *Elders* in all the Churches they planted, it is highly probable that he received his *Ordination* immediately from *their* Hands; and so St. *Chrysostom*, *Tom.* 5. *Edit. Savil. p.* 499. expressly tells us, that he did not so much admire *Ignatius*, for that he was accounted worthy of so great a Dignity, ἀλλ' ὅτι καὶ παρὰ ἁγίων ἐκείνων τ̀ ἀρχὴν ταύτην ἐνεχειρίσθη καὶ αἱ τῶν μακαρίων Ἀποστόλων χεῖρες τ̄ ἱερᾶς ἐκείνης ἥψαντο κεφαλῆς, i. e. but *because he obtained his Dignity from those holy Men, and the sacred Hands of the blessed Apostles had been laid upon his Head.* And the same may be said of *Polycarp* Bishop of *Smyrna*, of whom *Ignatius* makes honourable mention; and indeed it is not to be imagined that the Christian Churches would ever have so *universally* admitted of *Bishops*, as it is apparent they did in *Ignatius*'s Time, when the Apostles were *living*, had

had not some of them at least derived their Authority from the *Apostles immediately*; and considering how much St. *John*, who survived the Apostles, was reverenced to the last through all the Christian Churches, what likelihood is there that *those* very Churches should so far contemn both him and them, even whilst they were *living* among them, as to admit of a new Order of Men without their Authority to *oversee* and *govern* them? But that *de Facto* the Apostles did with their *own* Hands ordain *several Bishops* to preside over several Churches, is most certain, if any Credit may be given to *Ecclesiastical History*, which assures us, that they ordained *Dionysius* the *Areopagite* Bishop of *Athens*, *Caius* of *Thessalonica*, *Archippus* of *Colosse*, *Onesimus* of *Ephesus*, *Antipas* of *Pergamus*, *Euphroditus* of *Philippi*, *Crescens* of the *Gauls*, *Erastus* of *Macedonia*, *Trophimus* of *Arles*, *Jason* of *Tarsus*, *Titus* of *Corinth*, *Onesiphorus* of *Colophon*, *Quartus* of *Berytus*, *Paul* the Proconsul of *Narbona*. *Vide* Bishop *Taylor* of *Episcopacy*, *Sect*. 18. But then *thirdly* and *lastly*, from hence I also infer, that the *Bishops* of this Age were look'd upon as a *superiour* Order to all other Ecclesiastical Officers; for *Ignatius* not only enjoins the *Presbyters* and *Deacons* to *obey* their *Bishops*, but also presses them thereunto by the *Command of Christ*; and if by *Christ's Command* they were to obey their *Bishops*, then by *Christ's Institution* their *Bishops* were their *Superiours*. Thus much therefore we are assured of by the Testimony of *Ignatius*, that in the *Apostolick* Age *Bishops* were *universally* admitted in the Churches of Christ, that they *derived* their Authority from the Hands of the *Apostles*, and that by virtue of that *Authority* they were *superiour* to all other Ecclesiastical Officers; and this is all we contend for.

And now let us proceed to the Testimony of the *Writers* of the next *Age*, who conversed with those that were *Conversant* with the *Apostles*, of which number are *Justin Martyr*, *Hegesippus*, *Dionysius* Bishop of *Corinth*, *Irenæus*, and *Clemens Alexandrinus*. The first of which was converted to Christianity about the Year of our Lord 133. which is not above twenty five Years after the Death of St. *John*. This Writer in his *Apology* for Christianity to the Emperor *Antoninus*, giving an Account of the *Manner* of their publick Worship, makes mention of a προεστώς, *i. e.* a *President*, or *presiding Ecclesiastick* in the Mother Church, who did there consecrate the Bread and Wine in the Sacrament, and give it to the *Deacons* to distribute it to such as were present, and carry it to such as were absent, and who did receive the Charities of the People, and dispose of and manage the Stock of the Church. Now that προεστώς was the *Bishop*'s Title is evident, for so *Dionysius* Bishop of *Corinth*, who was *Justin Martyr*'s Cotemporary, uses the Word προεστώς and Ἐπίσκοπος. promiscuously, styling *Publius* Bishop of *Athens*, προεστώς, or President, and *Quadratus* his Successor Ἐπίσκοπος, or Bishop, *vide Euseb. lib*. 4. *cap*. 23. Next after him we have the Testimony of *Hegesippus*, who, as St. *Jerome*, *de Script. Eccles.* tells us, lived very near to the *Apostolick* Age; he wrote five Books of Commentaries, some Fragments of which are preserved in *Eusebius* his History, in which he not only makes mention of several *Bishops* with whom he conversed in his Journey from *Judæa* to *Rome*, and of *Primus* Bishop of *Corinth* by Name, and afterwards of *Anicetus*, *Soter*, and *Eleutherius*, Bishops of *Rome* successively; but also tells us, that after *James the Just*, who was the first Bishop of *Jerusalem*, had suffered a Martyrdom, *Simeon Cleophæ* was made Bishop of that Church, because he was of the Kindred of our Lord, *vide Euseb. lib*. 4. *cap*. 22. Not long after him *Dionysius* Bishop of *Corinth*, makes mention in several Epistles of several Bishops by Name, and particularly of *Publius* and *Quadratus*, successive Bishops of *Athens*, of *Dionysius* the *Areopagite* the first Bishop of that Church, of *Philip* Bishop of *Gortyna* in *Crete*, of *Palma* Bishop of *Amastris* in *Pontus*, of *Pinytus* Bishop of the *Gnossians*, and of *Soter* Bishop of *Rome*, *vide Euseb. lib*. 4. *cap*. 23. About the same Time lived *Irenæus* Bishop of *Lyons*, who, as himself tells us in his Epistle to *Florinus*, had often seen *Polycarp* the Disciple of St. *John*, *and did very well remember his Person and Behaviour, when he discoursed to the Multitude*; *the*

intimate Conversation he had with St. John, *and the rest of the Apostles who had seen our Lord.* And from him we have this express Testimony concerning the Matter in Debate, *We can reckon up those who were ordained Bishops by the Apostles in the Churches, who they were that succeeded them even down to our Times —— for the Apostles would have them to be in all Things perfect and unreprovable, whom they left to be their Successors, and to whom they delivered their Apostolick Authority,* And then he goes on, and gives us a Catalogue of eleven Bishops of *Rome*, by Name, beginning from *Linus*, to whom he tells us St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*, *Episcopatum administrandæ Ecclesiæ tradiderunt*, i. e. *delivered the Episcopal Power of governing that Church*, and ending with *Eleutherius*, who was the Twelfth, and did then actually preside in the Episcopal Chair. And that by Bishops in this Age, was meant such as presided over Presbyters as well as Laicks, is evident by the Distribution *Clemens Alexandrinus* makes, who was *Irenæus* his Cotemporary, between the προκοπαὶ Ἐπισκόπων, Πρεσβυτέρων καὶ Διακόνων, Strom. 6. *i. e. the Processes of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons*, and a little before, speaking of the Dignity of the Presbytery, he tells us, κἂν ἐνταῦθ' ἐπὶ γῆς πρωτοκαθεδρίᾳ μὴ τιμηθῇ. —— *i. e.* that it was not honoured with the *first Seat*, or placed in the *first Class* of the Ecclesiastick Orders; which plainly shews, that then there was an Order *above the Presbytery, viz.* the *Bishops*, whom presently after he mentions as the *first* Order of Ecclesiasticks. And that Passage which *Eusebius* quotes from him out of his Book, Τίς ὁ σωζόμενος πλούσιος. lately published, is a plain Argument, that in *his* Time *Bishops* were look'd on as a *distinct* Order from the rest of the Clergy; for he tells us, that when St. *John* returned from *Patmos* to *Ephesus*, he visited the neighbouring Provinces, ὅπου μὲν Ἐπισκόπους καταστήσων, ὅπου δὲ κλήρῳ ἕνα γέ τινα κληρώσων τῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος σημαινομένων, i. e. *partly that he might ordain Bishops, and partly that he might set apart such for the Clergy as were pointed out to him by the Holy Spirit*; by which it is evident, that in *Clement*'s Time at least, and, if he be not mistaken, in St. *John*'s too, the *Bishops* were a *distinct* Order from the rest of the Clergy, *viz.* the *Presbyters* and *Deacons*. Thus both in the *Apostolick Age*, and that *succeeding* it, we have abundant *Testimony* of the *Derivation* of the Superiority of the *Apostolick Order* from the Apostles to the *Bishops* of the Churches of Christ.

And then for the *next* Age we have the concurrent Testimonies of *Tertullian*, *Origen*, and St. *Cyprian*, not only of the *Continuance* of this *Apostolick* Superiority in the Church, but also of the *Derivation* of it from the *Apostles* themselves; but we need not cite their Words, it being *granted* by the most learned Advocates of the Presbyterian Government, that for several Years *before* these Fathers, *viz.* about the Year of our Lord 140. the *Episcopacy* was every where received in the Church; for they tell us, that though the *Apostles* exercised a Superiority over the other Ecclesiastical Orders, yet they left *none* behind to succeed them in that Power; but the Church *was* every where governed by a *Common Council of Presbyters:* But *this* Form of Government being found inconvenient, as giving too much Occasion for *Schisms* and *Divisions*, it was at last universally agreed upon, that *one Presbyter* should be chosen out to preside over all the rest; and this, say they, was the Beginning of the Episcopacy; for which they cite that famous Passage of St. *Jerom*, *Antequam Diaboli instinctu*, &c. i. e. *Before such Time as through the Instinct of the Devil, Divisions in Religion began, and it was said among the People, I am of* Paul, *I am of* Apollo, *and I of* Cephas, *the Churches were governed by Common Councils of Presbyters; but afterwards every Presbyter reckoning such as he baptized, to be his and not Christ's, it was decreed over all the World, that one from among the Presbyters should be chosen and set over all the rest, to whom should belong all the Care of the Churches, that so the Seeds of Schisms might be destroyed*; which universal Decree, as they guess, was made about the Year 140. Now not to dispute with them the *Sense* of this Passage, but allowing it to bear their Sense I shall only desire the Reader to consider,

First,

First, That it is the Testimony of one who lived long *after* the afore-cited Witnesses, and so far *less capable* of attesting so early a Matter of Fact; for some of the Witnesses above-cited were such as *lived* in the Days of the *Apostles*; others, such as lived in their Days who *lived* in the Days of the *Apostles*, and certainly these were much *more competent* Witnesses of what was done in the Apostles Days than St. *Jerom*, who was not born till about the Year 330. almost one hundred Years after *Origen* the latest, and three hundred Years after *Clemens* the earliest of the above-cited Witnesses; and certainly to prefer the Authority of *one single* Witness, who lived so *long after* the Matter of Fact, to the *unanimous* Attestation of so many *early* Witnesses, is both immodest and irrational.

II. It is also to be considered, that St. *Jerome* was a Witness in his *own Cause*, in which Case Men of his *Warmth* and *Passion* are too apt to exceed the Limits of Truth; for the Design of that Passage was to curb the Insolence of some pragmatical *Deacons*, who would needs advance themselves above the *Presbyters*, which St. *Jerome*, being a Presbyter *himself*, takes in high Disdain, and as the best of Men are too prone to do, when their *own* Concerns are at *stake*, bends the stick too much t'other Way, and depresses the *Deacons* too *low*, and advances the *Presbyters* too *high*. For,

III. In other Places, where he is not *biassed* by Partiality to his *own Order*, he talks at a quite different Rate; so in *Dial. advers. Luciferian. Dost thou ask why one that is not baptized by the Bishop doth not receive the Holy Ghost? Why it proceeds from hence, that the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles.* Where it is plain he places the *Bishops* in the same Rank with the Apostles, so also in *Ep.* 1. *ad Heliodor.* speaking of the Bishops of his Time, *they stand*, saith he, *in the Place of St.* Paul, *and hold the Place of St.* Peter, and in *Psal.* xlv. 16. *Now because the Apostles are gone from the World, thou hast instead of these their Sons the Bishops, and these are thy Fathers, because thou art governed by 'em:* And *Ep. ad Nepot. What* Aaron *and his Sons were, that we know the Bishops and the Presbyters are.* And therefore, as *Aaron* by *divine Right* was superiour to his Sons the *Priests*, so is the *Bishop* above his *Presbyters*; all which are as plain *Contradictions* to that famous Passage of his (understanding it as the *Presbyterians* do) as one Proposition can be to another: and whether is a Man more to be credited when he speaks without *Biass* or *Partiality*, or when he speaks in his *own Cause*, and under the Influence of his *own Interest*?

IV. It is further to be considered, that the *Decree* of which St. *Jerome* here speaks, by which the Government of the Church was translated from a *Common Council* of *Presbyters* to a single *Bishop*, must according to his own Words be *Apostolick*, and consequently much *earlier* than the *Presbyterians* will allow it; for it was made at that Time when it was said among the People, *I am of* Paul, *and I am of* Apollos, *and I of* Cephas; and this, as St. *Paul* tells us, was said in his Time, and therefore this *Decree* must be made in his Time, and that St. *Jerome* did mean so, we are elsewhere assured from his *own* Words; for so in his Book, *de Eccles. Script.* he tells us, *that immediately after the Ascension of our Lord, St.* James *was ordained by the Apostles to be Bishop of* Jerusalem, Timothy *by St.* Paul *Bishop of* Ephesus, Titus *Bishop of* Crete, *and* Polycarp *by St.* John *Bishop of* Smyrna. So that either he must here expresly *contradict* himself, or else the *Decree* of which he speaks must have been made *immediately after the Ascension of our Lord*, and consequently be a *Decree Apostolick*.

V. It is yet farther to be considered, that if any such *Decree*, of changing the Church Government from *Presbyterial* to *Episcopal*, had been made by the *Apostles*, it is strange we should not find the least mention of it in *Scripture*; and if it had been made after the *Apostles*, about the Year 140. it is as strange we should have no mention of it in *Ecclesiastick Antiquity*; for an *universal Change* of the *Government* of the *Church*, from one kind to another, is a Matter of such vast Moment, that had the *Apostles* made a Decree concerning it, they would doubtless have been very solicitous to *publish* it through all the

Churches, and to have transmitted down to *Posterity* some standing *Record* of it; which yet they were so far from doing, that they have not given us the least *Intimation* of it in all their Writings: And had it been made *afterwards* about the Year 140. to be sure all *primitive Antiquity* would have rung of such a *publick* and *important Alteration*: But on the contrary you see both *Clemens* and *Ignatius*, who lived *before* that *Period*, testify that the *Church* was not governed in *their* Time by a Common Council of *Presbyters*; but by *Bishops*; *Hegesippus*, *Irenæus*, and *Dionysius* of *Corinth*, who lived in that Period, are so far from taking *Notice* of any such *Decree* of Alteration, that they testify the Government of the Church by an *uninterrupted* Succession of *Bishops*, even from the *Apostles* themselves; and as for *Irenæus*, who gives us an Account of the Succession of the *Roman* Bishops from St. *Peter* down to the Time when he himself was at *Rome*, it was as easy for him to know who they were that succeeded from St. *Peter*, as it is for us to know who succeeded from Archbishop *Whitgift* in the Chair of *Canterbury*, he being no farther *distant* from the one than we are from the other. And though through the *Ambiguity* or *Defect* of the Records of *some* Churches, this *Succession* be not equally *clear* in all, yet in the most *eminent Churches*, such as *Jerusalem*, *Rome*, *Antioch* and *Alexandria*, the *Successions* are *as clear* as any Thing in Ecclesiastical History. And is it not much more reasonable to conclude what was the *Government* of *those* Churches that are not *known*, from what we find was the *Government* of those that are, than to question those Ecclesiastical Records that *are* preserved, because of the Uncertainty of those that are *not*? For though we do not find in all Churches an *exact* Catalogue of all their Bishops; yet we can't produce any *one* Instance, in any *one* ancient Church of any *other Form* of Government than the *Episcopal*; and therefore we may as well question whether ever there was any such Thing as an ancient *Monarchy* in the World, because many of the *Histories* of the Monarchs are *defective* as to their *Names*, and the Order of their *Succession*; as whether there was ever any such Thing as a *primitive Episcopacy* in the Church, because the Records of several Churches are *defective* as to the *Names* and *Successions* of their *Bishops*. Since therefore this Story of St. *Jerom*'s universal *Decree* is not only altogether *unattested*, but also directly *contradictory* to the concurrent Testimony of all *Antiquity*, how can we reasonably look upon it otherwise than as a meer *Figment* of his own Fancy? Especially considering,

VI. And *lastly*, How odiously this *Conceit* of his reflects upon the *Wisdom* of our *Saviour* and his *Apostles*; for the *Apostles*, devolving the Government of the Church upon Common Councils of *Presbyters*, was, as he himself tells us, the Occasion of sundry *Schisms* and *Divisions*, for the Removal of which, the Church afterwards found it necessary to *dissolve* those *Presbyteries* and introduce *Episcopacy* in their Room; and this *Jerome* approves as a very wise and prudent Action; *For*, saith he, *the Safety of the Church depends upon the Authority of the High-Priest*, or Bishop, *to whom if there were not given all supreme Authority, there would be as many Schisms in the Churches as there are Priests.* So that according to him, had the Church continued under that Government which the *Apostles* left in it, it must unavoidably have been *torn in Pieces* with endless *Schisms* and *Divisions*; and if so, either the *Apostles* were very *imprudent* in not foreseeing this, or very *neglective* in not preventing it; so that had not the *after-age* taken care to supply the *Defect* of their Conduct, by erecting a *wiser Form* of Government than they left, the Church had infallibly run to *ruin*. This is the unavoidable Consequence of St. *Jerom*'s Hypothesis; which therefore I can look upon no otherwise than as a meer *Device* of his own Brain, snatched up in haste to defend his Order against the Insolence of those factious *Deacons*, that flew in the Face of the *Presbytery*.

This therefore being removed, which is the *main*, and indeed the *only* considerable *Objection* against the *universal Conformity* of the *Primitive* Church to the *Episcopal* Government, it remains, that if any Credit may be given either

to

to those Writers that lived in the *Apostolick Age*, or to those who immediately *succeeded them*, it is evident from their unanimous Testimonies, that the *Episcopacy* is nothing else but only the *Apostolick Superiority* derived from the Hands of the *Apostles* in a continued *Succession* from one Generation to another; and to *reject* their Testimony is not only very *unreasonable* (there being at least as much reason why we should reject all ancient History) but also of very *dangerous* Consequence, since 'tis from thence that we derive the very *Canon* of *Scripture*, and so we may as well reject it in this Instance as in the other.

IV. And *lastly*, That the *rightful Government* of the Church of Christ is *Episcopal*, is evident also from our *Saviour*'s declared *Allowance* and *Approbation* of the primitive Practice in this Matter, *viz.* in those Seven Epistles which he sent by St. *John* to the Seven Churches of *Asia*, all which he directs particularly to the *Seven Angels* of those Churches, whom he not only styles, *the Seven Stars in his own right Hand*, or Seven *Lights* of those Seven Churches, *vide Rev.* i. 20. and *Rev.* ii. 1. but in every Epistle particularly owns them for his *Angels* or *Messengers.* If therefore we can prove that these Seven *Angels* were at that time the Seven *Bishops* that presided over both the Clergy and the Laity of those Seven Churches, they will be an *unanswerable* Instance of our Saviour's *Allowance* and *Approbation* of the Episcopal Order. In order therefore to the clearing this Matter I shall shew,

First, That they were *single* Persons.

Secondly, That they were Persons of great *Authority* in those Churches.

Thirdly, That they were the *Presidents* or *Bishops* of those Churches.

First, That they were *single* Persons, is evident, because they are all along mentioned as such; *the Angel of the Church of Ephesus*, is the singular Number; *the Angel of the Church of Smyrna*, and so of all the rest; and so every where in the Body of the Epistles they are all along address'd to in the singular Number; *I know thy Works and thy Labour*; *nevertheless I have a few Things against thee*; *remember whence thou art fallen, repent, and do thy first Works*; and the like, in all which our Saviour plainly writes to them as to *single* Persons: It is true, what he writes to them, he writes not only to them *personally*, but also to the *People* under their *Government* and *Inspection*; and therefore sometimes he mentions the People plurally; so *Chap.* iii. *ver.* 10. *The Devil shall cast some of you into Prison*; and so *ver.* 13. and *ver.* 23. but this is so far from arguing that these *Angels* were not *single* Persons, that it argues the quite *contrary*; since if they had not, what reason can there be assign'd, why our Saviour should not mention them *plurally*, as well as the *People*? I know 'tis objected, that the *Angel* of the Church of *Thyatira* is mentioned *plurally*, *Chap.* ii. *ver.* 24. *But unto you I say, and unto the rest of Thyatira*, where by *you*, it is supposed must be meant the *Angel*, and by *the rest of Thyatira*, the *People*, to which I answer, that in the ancient *Greek* Manuscripts, and particularly in that of St. *James*'s, καὶ, or *and*, is left out; and so the Words run thus, *but unto you the rest of Thyatira*, or *to the rest of you at Thyatira*, which is set in Opposition to those of *Thyatira* that had been *seduced* into the Sect of *Jezabel*, and therefore cannot be understood of the *Angel* who is all along mentioned in the *singular* Number; therefore had he not been a *single* Person, no Account can be given why he should be mention'd single, and *the rest of Thyatira* plurally. But then,

Secondly, That these single Persons were of great *Authority* in those Churches is evident not only by that honourable Title of *Angel*, that is given them, which plainly shews them to be Persons of *Office* and *Eminence*, and not only by our *Saviour*'s directing his Epistles to *them*, to be *communicated* by them to their several Churches, but also from that *Authority* which the *Angel* of *Ephesus* exercised there, and which the Angels of *Pergamus* and *Thyatira* ought to have exercised, but did *not:* For as for the Angel of *Ephesus*, he is commended for *trying them which said they were Apostles, and were not*, and discovering them to be *Liars*, which Words plainly denote a *juridical Trial* and *Conviction* of some Person or Persons, who *pretended* to *apostolical Authority*, but upon Examination

amination were found to be *Cheats* and *Impostors*; and then as for the Angel of the Church of *Pergamus*, he is blamed for *having* in his Church *those that held the Doctrine of* Balaam, or of the *Nicolaitans*; which plainly shews, that he had *Power* to remedy it by casting them out of the Church; for if he had not, how could he have been justly *blamed* for suffering them? And the same may be said of the Angel of the Church of *Thyatira*, who is also blamed for *suffering the Woman* Jezabel, which was not in his Power to prevent, unless we suppose him to have *Authority* to eject her and her Followers. But then,

Thirdly and *lastly*, That these *single* Persons were the *Presidents* or *Bishops* of those Churches, is also evident from the most *primitive Antiquity*; for so in the anonymous Tract of *Timothy*'s Martyrdom recorded in *Biblioth. Pat. n.* 244. we are told, that when St. *John* the Apostle returned from his Exile in *Patmos*, which was two or three Years after he wrote his Revelations, αὐτὸς δι' ἑαυτοῦ, ἑπτὰ συμπαρόντων ἐπισκόπων τῆς Ἐφεσίων ἀντιλαμβάνεται μητροπόλεως, i. e. *that being assisted with the Presence of the Seven Bishops of that Province he assumed to himself the Government of it.* Now that these Seven *Bishops* were the same with those Seven *Angels* he wrote to in his *Revelations* is evident, because all those Seven Churches in which those Seven Angels presided, lay within the Circuit of the *Lydian* or *Proconsular Asia*, of which *Ephesus* was the Metropolis; and therefore who else can we so fairly suppose these Seven *Bishops* to be, by whom he governed the Province of *Ephesus*, as the Seven *Angels* of those Seven Churches, which were all of them within that Province? And St. *Austin* expresly calls the *Angel* of the Church of *Ephesus*, the *Præpositus Ecclesiæ*, *i. e.* the *Governour* of the Church, *Ep.* 162. and speaking of those Seven *Angels*, he styles them *Episcopi sive præpositi Ecclesiarum, the Bishops or Governours of the Churches, Comment. in Revel.* So also the Commentaries under the Name of St. *Ambrose*, referring to these Angels in 1 *Cor. c.* xi. expressly tells us, that by those *Angels he means the Bishops*; and that they were so is most indubitably evident of the *Angel* of the Church of *Smyrna* in particular, who could be no other than St. *Polycarp*, who was most certainly made Bishop of *Smyrna* some Years *before* the writing these Epistles, and continued Bishop of it a great many Years *after*; for so *Ignatius*, who was his Cotemporary, in his Epistle to that Church styles him, *Polycarp your Bishop*; and earnestly exhorts his *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, as well as the *Laity*, to be subject to him; and *Irenæus* who *personally knew* him, hath this Passage concerning him: Πολύκαρπος ἢ ὃ μόνον ὑπὸ Ἀποστόλων μαθητευθεὶς, &c. Polycarpus *was not only instructed by the Apostles, and did not only converse with many of those who had seen our Lord, but by the Apostles who were in* Asia, *was made Bishop of* Smyrna, *Euseb. Hist. l.* iv. *c.* 15. and in their Encyclical Epistle of his Martyrdom, the whole Church of *Smyrna* style him *Bishop of the Catholick Church of* Smyrna, *ibid.* So also *Polycrates*, Bishop of *Ephesus*, who was Thirty-eight Years old when *Polycarp* suffered, tells us, *that he was Bishop and Martyr in* Smyrna, *Euseb. Hist. l.* v. *c.* 24. and the same is attested by *Tertullian*, *Eusebius* and St. *Jerom*, and indeed by *all* Ecclesiastick *Antiquity:* So that 'tis a plain Case, that *one* of these *Angels*, to whom St. *John* writes, was *Bishop* of the Church whereof he styles him the *Angel*, and since *one* was so, to be sure *all* were so; especially considering that *very near*, if not at the very time when these Epistles were written, we have certain Accounts that there were *Bishops* actually *presiding* in these Seven Churches. So within twelve Years after these Epistles were written, *Ignatius*, in his Epistle to the *Ephesians* makes mention of *Onesimus* their *Bishop*, whom he exhorts them all, as well *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, as *Laity* to obey. That there was also at the same Time a Bishop in *Philadelphia*, is abundantly evident from *Ignatius* his Epistle to that Church, though he doth not name him; and about the same Time *Carpus* was Bishop of *Thyatria*, as the ancient *Roman* Martyrology testifies, and *Segaris* of *Laodicea*, vide *Euseb. Hist. l.* iv. *c.* 25. And *Melito* Bishop of *Sardis*, ibid. and as for the Church of

Pergamus,

Pergamus; *Paræus*, in his Commentary on *Chap.* ii. of the *Revelations*, proves out of *Aretas Cæsariensis*, that *Antipas*, that *faithful Martyr*, mentioned *Rev.* ii. 13. was Bishop of it immediately *before* the Angel of that Church to whom St. *John* wrote; and that *that* Angel was one *Gaius*, who, as he proves out of *Clemens*, immediately succeeded *Antipas* in the Episcopal Chair. Since therefore it is apparent that *at* the writing these Epistles to these Seven Churches there was a *Bishop* actually *presiding* in *one* of them, and that about the same Time there were *Bishops* presiding also in *all* the rest, there can be no *Colour* of Reason to doubt, but that *all* those Churches had *Bishops* in them when St. *John* wrote to them; and if so, to be sure those *Bishops* being the *Governours* of those Churches, and having the Charge of them committed to them, were those very Angels whom St. *John* wrote to, because he all along writes to them as to those who were the *Overseers* and *Governours* of their respective Churches; and if those Angels were *Bishops*, then in them our *Saviour* expressly *allows* and *approves* of the Episcopal Order, since he not only dignifies them with the Name of Angel, but calls them *Stars in his own right Hand.*

The Sum of all therefore is this, if our *Saviour*'s own *Institution*, seconded by the *Practice* of his Apostles upon it, and succeeded by the *Conformity* of all the *Primitive* Churches to it, and this Conformity of theirs, authorized by the *express Approbation* of our *Saviour*, be a sufficient Argument of the *Divine* Right of any *Form* of Church-Government, then must the *Episcopal* Form, which hath *all* these Things you see to plead for itself, be of *Divine Right* and *Ordination.* Having thus shewn at large what that *Ecclesiastical* or *Spiritual Government* is, which Christ hath established in his Church, I proceed,

Thirdly and *lastly*, To shew what are the proper *Ministries* of this Government in the Kingdom of Christ; and these are of two Sorts: *First*, such as are common to the *Bishops*, or *Governours* of the Church with the *inferiour Officers*; and *secondly*, such as are *peculiar* to the *Bishops* or *Governours*. *First*, such as are common to the Bishops, together with the inferiour Officers of the Church; and these are, 1. To *teach* the Gospel: 2. To *administer* the Evangelical Sacraments: 3. To *offer* up the Publick Prayers and Intercessions of Christian Assemblies.

I. To *teach* the Gospel, which is the first *Ministerial Act* mentioned by our Saviour in the Commission which he gave his Apostles, *Go teach all Nations*, Matth. xxviii. 19. and accordingly the Apostles declare, *Acts* vi. 2, 4. that *preaching* the Word was one of the *principal* Employments appertaining to their Office; but yet it is evident, that it never was *restrained* to their Office; for not only the Apostles, but the *Seventy Disciples* also were commissioned to *preach* the Gospel by our Saviour, *Luke* x. 9, 10, 11. and even in the Apostles Days, not only *they*, but *Philip* also, and *Stephen*, and *Lucius* of *Cyrene*, who were no Apostles, did yet preach the Gospel to the *World*; and besides the Apostles there were *Prophets*, *Teachers*, and *Evangelists*, that preached the Gospel as well as they. But yet as for the *Office* of *Preaching*, it is plain that none were ever admitted to it, but either by *immediate Commission* from our Saviour, or by *Apostolick Ordination*, or by an immediate *miraculous Unction* of the Holy Ghost, by which they were *inspired* with the Gift of Preaching, and enabled *freely* and *readily*, and without any Study of their *own* to explain, and prove, and apply the Doctrines of the Gospel to their Hearers; and that either in their *own* or *other* Languages, as occasion required; which Gift was the same with that which is called in Scripture, *the Gift of Utterance*; and it being bestowed upon them for the Publick Benefit and Edification of the Church, the very *bestowing* it, (without any other *Ordination*) was an immediate *Mission* from the Holy Ghost; only they who pretended to it, were to be *tried* by such as had the Gift of *discerning of Spirits*, vide 1 *Cor.* xii. 10. compared with 1 *Cor.* xiv. 29. and if upon that Trial their Pretence was found *real*, they were own'd and receiv'd without any more ado, as *authorized Preachers* sent by the Holy-Ghost; and it was upon this *extraordinary Mission*, as

as it seems very probable, that those *extraordinary Offices* of Prophets and Evangelists were founded, both which included Authority to preach the Gospel; and therefore upon the *Cessation* of this *extraordinary Mission*, those *Offices ceased* immediately with it, as depending wholly upon it; and from thenceforth *none* were ever admitted to the *Office* of *Preaching*, but by *ordinary Mission* and *Ordinanation* from the Apostolate derived to the *Bishops* and *Governours* of the Church. For though there are some very early Instances of learned *Lay-Men*, that were admitted to *preach* upon some *emergent* Occasions, and upon special *licence* from the *Bishop*; yet can there no *one* Instance be produced of any that were admitted to the *Office* of *Preaching*, without Episcopal Ordination.

II. Another of the Ministries *common* to the *Bishops* with the inferiour *Clergy* is the *Administration* of the Evangelical *Sacraments*; for it was to his Apostles, and in them to their *Successors*, that our Saviour gave the *Commission of baptizing all Nations, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*: and of *doing this*, (*i. e.* of consecrating and administring the Holy Eucharist) *in Remembrance of me:* but yet it is evident, that *this* Ministry was not so *confined* to the *Apostolick* Order, as that none but *they* were allowed to exercise it; for even in the Apostles Days *Philip* and *Ananias*, who were *no* Apostles, baptized, and St. *Peter* commanded the Brethren with him, who were *no* Apostles neither to *baptize* those Gentile Converts upon whom the Holy Ghost descended, *Acts* x. 48. and there is no doubt, but when those Three thousand Souls, *Acts* ii. were all baptized at one time, there were a great many *other Baptizers* besides the *Apostles*; and that Passage of St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor*. i. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. where he tells us, that he baptized *none* in the Church of *Corinth*, though it were of his own planting, except *Crispus*, *Gaius*, and the Houshold of *Stephanus*, is a plain Argument, that when the Apostles had *converted* Men to the Christian Faith, they generally ordered them to be baptized by the *inferiour Ministers* of the Church that attended them; and then as for the *Consecration* of the Holy Eucharist, though when any of the Apostles were present, it was doubtless *ordinarily* performed by them; yet considering how fast Christianity encreased, and how frequently Christians did then partake of this Sacrament, it is not to be supposed that the Apostles could be present in *all* Places where it was administred, nor consequently that they could consecrate it in *every particular* Congregation: For though it was a very *early* Custom for the *Bishop* to *consecrate* the Elements in *one* Congregation, and then send them *abroad* to be administred in several *others*; yet this was only upon *special* Occasions: But *ordinarily* they were *consecrated* in the same Places where they were *administred*; in all which Places, it was impossible either for the Apostles at first, or after them for their *Successors*, the *Bishops*, to be present at the same Time; and therefore there can be no doubt but the *Consecration* as well as the *Administration*, was ordinarily performed by the *inferiour Presbyters*, in the Absence of the *Apostles* and *Bishops*. But it is most certain that *none* were ever allowed in the *Primitive* Church to *Consecrate* the Eucharist, but either a *Bishop* or a *Presbyter*. And as for *Baptism*, because it is in some degree more *necessary* than the *Eucharist*, as being the Sign of *Admission* into the *New Covenant*, by which we are at first intitled to it, not only *Bishops* and *Presbyters*, but in their Absence, or by their Allowance, *Deacons* also were authorized to administer it; for so even in the Apostles Days *Philip* the Deacon baptized at *Samaria*, *Acts* viii. 12. and afterwards not only *Deacons*, but *Laymen* too were allowed to administer it in Case of *Necessity*, when neither a *Deacon*, nor *Presbyter*, nor *Bishop* could be procured; that so none might be *debarred* of Admission into the *New Covenant* that were disposed and qualified to receive it: But the Churches allowing this to *Laymen* only in Cases of *Necessity*, is a plain Argument that none had a *standing Authority* to administer it, but only Persons in *Holy Orders*. For that Authority which a *present Necessity* creates, is only *present*, and *ceases* with the Necessity that created it.

III. And

III. And *lastly*, Another of the Ministries *common* to the *Bishops* with the inferior *Clergy*, is to offer up the *Publick Prayers* and *Intercessions* of Christian Assemblies: For to be sure none can be authorized to perform the Publick Offices of the Church, but only such as are *set apart* and *ordained* to be the publick Officers of it. Now *Prayer* is one of the most *solemn* Offices of Christian Assemblies; and therefore as in the *Jewish* Church, none but the *High Priests*, and *Priests* and *Levites*, who were the *only publick Ministers* of Religion, were authorized to offer up the *publick Prayers* of the Congregation, *vide* 2 *Chron.* xxxix. 27. so in the Christian none but *Bishops*, *Priests* and *Deacons*, who *alone* are the *publick Ministers* of Christianity, are authorized to offer up the *publick Addresses* of Christian Assemblies; it is their peculiar λειτουργεῖν τῷ κυρίῳ, i. e. *to perform the publick Offices to the Lord*, Acts xiii. 2. for so the Word λειτουργεία, signifies *publick Service*, and is used to denote those *publick Services*, (of which one was offering up the *Common* Prayers of the People) which the Priests in their Turns performed in the Temple, *vide* Luke i. 23. and hence it is, that the Ministers of the Christian Religion are called λειτουργοὶ, *Rom.* xv. 16. because it is their proper Business to officiate the *publick Services* of the Christian Church; and accordingly in *Rev.* v. 10. *the four and twenty Elders*, (that is, the holy Bishops of the Church, as appears by their having Crowns of Gold or Mitres on their Heads, in Allusion to the High Priest's Mitre, *chap.* iv. *ver.* 4.) are said *to have every one of them Harps and Golden Viols full of Odours which are the Prayers of Saints*, referring to the Incense which the Priests were wont to offer in the Sanctuary, which Oblation was a *mystical Offering* up the *Prayers* of the *People*, *vide Luke* i. 10. which plainly intimates, that as it was one Part of the Office of those *Jewish* Priests to offer the *Incense*, and therewithal the *Prayers* of the People, so is it also of the Publick Ministers of *Christianity*, to offer up the Prayers of Christian Assemblies. And as in the *Jewish* Church not only the Priests, but the *Levites* also communicated with the *High Priests* in this Ministry of offering up the Prayers of the Congregation, so in the Christian Church, not only the *Presbyters*, but the *Deacons* also, always communicated in it with their *Bishop*. Having thus given an Account of those religious *Ministries* which are common to the *Bishops* with the *inferiour Officers* of the Church, I proceed in the next Place to shew what those *Ministries* are which are *peculiar* to the Bishops or Governors of the Church, all which are reducible to four Particulars: 1. To *make Laws* for the Peace and good Order of the Church. 2. To *ordain* to Ecclesiastical Offices. 3. To *execute* that spiritual Jurisdiction which Christ hath established in his Church. 4. To *confirm* such as have been instructed in Christianity.

I. One *peculiar* Ministry of the *Bishops* and *Governours* of the Church is to make *Laws* and *Canons* for the Security and Preservation of the Church's Peace and good Order; and this is implied in the very *Essence* of *Government*, which necessarily supposes a *Legislative Power* within itself, to command and oblige the Subject to *do* or *forbear* such Things as it shall judge conducive to the *Preservation* or *Disturbance* of their Common-weal, without which Power no Government can be enabled to obtain its end, which is the *Good of the Publick*. Since therefore the Church, by Christ's *own* Institution, is a *governed Society* of Men, we must either suppose its Government to be very *lame* and *defective*, which would be to blaspheme the Wisdom of our Saviour, or allow it to have a *Legislative Power* inherent in it. But that *de facto* it hath such a *Power* in it, is evident from the Practice of the Apostles, who, as all agree, had the Reins of Church-Government delivered into their Hands by our Saviour; for so in *Acts* xv. 6. we are told, that upon Occasion of that famous Controversy about Circumcision, *the Apostles and Elders came together to consider of this Matter*; where by the *Elders*, by the Consent of all Antiquity, is meant the *Bishops* of *Judæa*, *vide* Dr. *Hammond* on *Acts* xi. *Note B.* And after mature Debate and Deliberation this is the Result of the Council, *it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater Burthen than these necessary*

Things, ver. 28. so that those *necessary Things* specified in the next *Verse* were, it seems, *laid upon* them as *a Burthen*, *i. e.* legally imposed on them as Matter of *Duty*; for herein it is plain the Apostles exercised a *Legislative Power* over those Christian Communities they wrote to, *viz.* in requiring 'em to abstain from some Things which were *never* prohibited *before* by any standing Law of Christianity; and as the *Apostles* and primitive *Bishops* made Laws by common Consent for the Church in general, so did they also by their own *single* Authority for *particular* Churches, to which they were more *peculiarly* related. Thus St. *Paul* after he had prescribed some Rules to the *Corinthians* for their more decent Communication of the Lord's Supper, tells them, that *other Things he would set in order when he came among them*, 1 Cor. xi. 34. but how could he otherwise do this than by giving them certain Laws and Canons, for the better Regulation of their religious Offices; so also 1 *Cor.* xvi. 1. the same Apostle makes mention of an *Order* or *Canon*, which he gave to the Churches of *Galatia*, which he enjoins the Church of *Corinth* also to observe, and in 1 *Tim.* v. he gives *Timothy* several Ecclesiastical Rules, to *give in Charge* to his Church, *ver.* 7. so also *Tit.* i. 5. he tells *Titus*, that for this Cause he left him in *Crete*, with Apostolick or Episcopal Power, *that he might set in order the Things that were wanting*, *i. e.* that by wholsome Laws and Constitutions, he might *redress* those *Disorders*, and *supply* those *Defects* which the Shortness of St. *Paul*'s Stay there would not permit him to provide for. By all which Instances it is abundantly evident, that the Governours of the Church have a *Legislative Power* inherent in them both to make Laws by common Consent for the Regulation of the Church in *general*, and to prescribe the Rules of *Decency* and *Order* in their own *particular* Churches. For what the *Apostles* and *primitive Bishops* did, to be sure they had *Authority* to do, and whatsoever *Authority* they had, they *derived* it down to their *Successors*. And accordingly we find this *Ecclesiastick Legislation*, was always administred by the Apostles *Successors* the *Bishops*, who not only gave Laws both to the Clergy and Laity in their own *particular Churches*, but also made Laws for the *whole Church* by common Consent in their holy Councils, wherein during the first four general Councils no Ecclesiastick beneath a *Bishop* was ever allowed a Suffrage, unless it were by *Deputation* from his Bishop; and though in making Laws for their *own* Churches they generally conducted themselves by the Advice and Counsel of their *Presbyters*, and sometimes also admitted them into their Debates both in their provincial and general Councils; yet this was only in *preparing* the Matter of their Laws. But that which gave them the *Form* of *Laws* was purely the *Episcopal Authority* and *Suffrage*; and whatsoever was decreed either by the Bishop in Council with his *Presbyters*, or by the *Bishops* in Council among themselves, was always received by the Churches of Christ as *authentick Law*. It is true, this *Legislative Power* of the Church (as was shewn before,) extends not so far as to controul the Decrees of the *Civil Sovereign*, who is next to, and immediately under God in all Causes, and over all Persons supreme, and is no otherwise accountable by the Laws of *Christianity*, than he was by the Laws of *Natural Religion*; and therefore as the *Civil Sovereign* cannot countermand *God*'s Laws, so neither can the *Church* the *Civil Sovereigns*: But yet as next to the Laws of *God*, the Laws of the *Civil Sovereign* are to be obeyed; so next to the Laws of the *Civil Sovereign* the Laws of the *Church* are to be obey'd.

II. Another *peculiar* Ministry of the *Bishops* and *Governours* of the Church, is, to *consecrate* and *ordain* to Ecclesiastical Offices. For that those *holy Ministries* which Christ himself performed while he was on Earth, such as *preaching* the *Gospel*, *administring* the evangelical Sacraments, &c. might be continued in his Church throughout all Generations, he not only *himself* ordained his *twelve Apostles* a little before he left the World, to perform those *Ministries* in his Absence, but in their *Ordination* transferred on them his *own Mission* from the Father, deriving upon them the *same Authority* to *ordain others*

that

that he had to ordain *them*; that ſo they might derive *their Miſſion* to *others*, as he did *his* to *them*, through all ſucceeding Generations; for this is neceſſarily implied in the Commiſſion he gave them, *John* xx. 21. *As my Father hath ſent me, ſo ſend I you*; that is, I do not only ſend you with full Authority to act for *me* in all Things as my Father ſent me to act for *him*; but I alſo ſend you with the ſame Authority to ſend *others*, that I now exerciſe in ſending *you*; for unleſs this be implied in their Miſſion, he did not ſend them as his Father ſent *him*; unleſs he gave them the *ſame Authority* to propagate *their Miſſion* to *others*, that his Father gave him to propagate *his Miſſion* to *them*, how could he ſay, that *he ſent them as his Father ſent him?* Since he muſt have ſent them *without* that very Authority from his Father, which he then *exerciſed* in ſending them. Now the *Perſons* whom he ſent were the eleven Apoſtles, as you will ſee by comparing this of St. *John* with *Luke* xxiv. 33, 36. *Mark* xvi. 14. *Matth.* xxviii. 16. in all which Places we are expreſly told, that it was the Eleven he appeared to when he gave this *Commiſſion*, and conſequently, it muſt be the Eleven to whom he gave it. This *Commiſſion* therefore of ſending *others* being originally transferred by our Saviour upon the *Apoſtolick* Order, no others could have right to *transfer* it to others, but only ſuch as were admitted of *that Order*; none could give it to *others*, but only thoſe to whom *Chriſt* gave it; and therefore ſince Chriſt himſelf gave it to none but *Apoſtles*, none but *Apoſtles* could derive it; and accordingly we find in Scripture, that all *Eccleſiaſtick Commiſſions*, were either given by the Hands of ſome of thoſe *firſt Apoſtles* who received their Commiſſion *immediately* from our Saviour, or elſe by ſome of thoſe *ſecondary Apoſtles*, that were admitted into *Apoſtolick* Orders by them; which *ſecondary Apoſtles*, as was ſhewn before, were the ſame with thoſe whom we now call *Biſhops*; for ſo in *Acts* vi. 3, 6. the Seven firſt *Deacons* we read of were ordained by the *Apoſtles*, the whole Number of the Diſciples being preſent, but the Apoſtles only *appointing and laying their Hands on them*, and in *Acts* xiv. 23. we are told, that *Paul* and *Barnabas*, two of the *Apoſtles*, *ordained Elders in every Church*, that is, of *Lyſtra*, *Iconium*, and *Antioch*; and though theſe two were ordained Apoſtles of the *Gentiles* by *certain Prophets and Teachers* in the Church of *Antioch*, *Acts* xiii. 1, 3. yet there is no doubt but thoſe *Prophets and Teachers* were ſuch as had received the *Apoſtolick Character*, (being ordained by the Apoſtles Biſhops of the Churches of *Syria*) for otherwiſe how could they have *derived it?* For ſo *Judas* and *Silas* are called Prophets, *Acts* xv. 32. and yet *verſe* 22. they are ſaid to be ἡγούμενοι ἐν τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς, that is, *Rulers among the Brethren*, or Biſhops of *Judæa*, and afterwards we find that Ordination was *confined* to ſuch as had been admitted to the *Apoſtolate*; for ſo the Power of *laying on of Hands* in the Church of *Epheſus* was committed by St. *Paul* to *Timothy*, whom he himſelf by *the laying on of Hands* had ordained the *Apoſtle* or *Biſhop* of that Church, 2 *Tim.* v. 22. 1 *Tim.* i. 6. ſo alſo the Power of ordaining in the Church of *Crete* was by St. *Paul* committed to *Titus*, whom he had alſo ordained the *Apoſtle* or *Biſhop* of that Church, *Tit.* i. 5. *For this Cauſe left I thee in* Crete *to ordain Elders in every City*. Thus all through the whole Scripture-Hiſtory, we find the Power of *Ordination* adminiſtred by ſuch, and none but ſuch, as were of the *Apoſtolick Order*, *viz.* either by the *Prime Apoſtles*, or by the *ſecondary Apoſtles* or *Biſhops*. And if we conſult the *primitive Antiquities*, which to be ſure, in Matters of *Fact* at leaſt, are the beſt Interpreters of Scripture, we ſhall always find the Power of giving Orders *confined* and *limited* to *Biſhops*, which is ſo undeniable, that St. *Jerom* himſelf, who endeavours his utmoſt to *equalize* Preſbyters with Biſhops, is yet fain to do it with an *exceptâ Ordinatione*, *Ep. ad Evagr. Quid facit exceptâ Ordinatione Epiſcopus quod Presbyter non faciat?* What can the Biſhop do, except ordaining, that the Preſbyter may not do alſo?

III. Another *peculiar* Miniſtry of the *Biſhops* and *Governours* of the Church, is to execute that *Spiritual Juriſdiction* which Chriſt hath eſtabliſhed in it, *i. e.* to *cite* ſuch as are accuſed of ſcandalous Offences before their Tribunals, to

inspect and *examine* the Accusation, and upon sufficient Evidence of the Truth of it, to *admonish* the Offender of his Fault; and in case he obstinately persist in it, to *exclude* him from the *Communion* of the Church, and from all the Benefits of Christianity, till such Time as he gives sufficient Evidence of his Repentance and Amendment, and then to *receive* him in again. For that Christ hath established such a *Jurisdiction* in his Church is evident from that Passage, *Matt.* xviii. 16, 17, 18, *Moreover, if thy Brother shall trespass against thee, go tell him his Fault between him and thee alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gain'd thy Brother; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the Mouth of two or three Witnesses every Word may be established, i. e.* that thou mayst be able, in case he doth not then amend, to produce sufficient Testimony of his Guilt before the Church's Tribunal, to which thou art next to apply thyself; *and if he shall neglect to hear them, i. e.* to promise Amendment upon their Admonition, take them along with thee and *tell it to the Church*, that so she may examine the Matter, and upon thy proving his Guilt by sufficient Witness may authoritatively admonish him to amend; *but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen Man and a Publican, i. e.* give him over for a desperate Sinner, as one that is to be ejected from the Communion of the Church, and no longer to enjoy the common Benefits of a Christian; *for verily I say unto you,* that it is to you of the Church, before whom this obstinate Offender is cited and accused, (for now he speaks no longer in the singular Number) *Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth shall be loosed in Heaven, i. e.* whomsoever ye shall for just Cause eject from the Communion of the Church into the State of *a heathen Man and a Publican,* I will certainly exclude out of Heaven, unless he reconcile himself to you by Confession, and promise of Amendment, and if thereupon you pardon him, and receive him into the Church's Communion, I will most certainly pardon him too, if he perform his Promise: For that by *binding and loosing upon Earth* our Saviour means excluding out of the Church, and receiving in again, is evident from that parallel Passage, *Matt.* xvi. 19. *I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth shall be loosed in Heaven*; where by *the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven,* is plainly meant the Authority of a *Steward* to govern his Church or Family; for so *Isa.* xxii. 21, 22. God promises *Eliachim,* that he would *cloath him with the Robe of Shebna, who was over the Houshold, ver.* 15. *i. e.* Steward of the King's Family, and that he would *commit Shebna's Government into his Hand,* &c. and then it follows, *And the Key of the House of David will I lay upon his Shoulders, so he shall open and none shall shut; and he shall shut and none shall open*; that is in short, I will make him the *Governour* of the Family, and give him Power to *admit* or *exclude* what Servants he pleases; and accordingly by *the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven,* must be meant the Government of the Church; for so Keys denote Authority to govern, *vide Rev.* iii. 7. and by *binding and loosing,* the Power of shutting out of, or readmitting into it; and therefore in *John* xx. 23. this binding and loosing is thus expressed, *whose Sins ye remit* or loose *shall be remitted* or loosed, *whose Sins ye retain* or keep bound *shall be retained* or kept bound; for though the *Words* are different from those in St. *Matthew,* yet they are of the same *Import* and *Signification,* and consequently our Saviour's Meaning must be the same *here* as *there, viz.* whose Sins you loose from the Penalty of *Exclusion* from the *Church,* I also will loose from the Penalty of *Exclusion* out of *Heaven*; and whose Sins you keep bound or obliged to *that Penalty,* I will also keep bound and obliged to *this.*

This is the *spiritual Jurisdiction* which Christ hath established in his Church, to bind or loose, suspend or restore, excommunicate or absolve; and this he hath wholly deposited in the *Episcopal Order:* For in all the above-cited Places it was only to his *Apostles* that he derived this *Jurisdiction,* they alone were the *Stewards* to whom he committed the Keys and Government of his *Family*; and it was to them alone that he promised, that they should *sit upon twelve Thrones,*

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judging the twelve Tribes of Israel; that is, to rule and govern the Spiritual *Israel*, which is the Christian Church, even as the *Phylarchæ*, or Chiefs of the Tribes, governed the Twelve Tribes of natural *Israel*, *Matth.* xix. 28. and hence in that mystical Representation of the Church by a City descending from Heaven, *Rev.* xxi. the Wall of it is said to have *twelve Foundations, and upon them twelve Names of the twelve Apostles*, ver. 14. and those twelve Foundations are compared to *twelve precious Stones*, to denote their *Power* and *Dignity* in the Church, *ver.* 19, 20. and the Wall being exactly meted is found to be One hundred and forty-four Cubits, that is, twelve times twelve, to denote that these Twelve Apostles had each of them an equal Portion allotted him in the *Government* and *Administration* of the Church, *ver.* 17. This *Spiritual Jurisdiction* therefore, of governing the Church, and administring the Censures of it, being by our Saviour whol', lodged in the *Apostolate*, none can justly claim or pretend to it but such as are of the *Apostolick Order*; and accordingly in the *Apostolick* Age we find it was always administred either *immediately* by the *Apostles* themselves, or by the *Bishops* of the several Churches to whom they *communicated* their Order: fos thus in the Church of *Corinth* it was St. *Paul* who pronounced the Sentence of Excommunication against the Incestuous Person; *for I verily, as absent in Body, but present in Spirit, have judged* or pronounced Sentence *already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath done this Deed*, 1 Cor. v. 3. and what he orders them to do, *ver.* 4, 5. was only to declare and execute his Sentence; and 2 *Cor.* xiii. 2. he threatens them *that heretofore had sinned, that if he came again, he would not spare them*; and that by his *not sparing them* he meant, that he would proceed against them with *Ecclesiastical Censure*, is evident from *verse* 1. *In the Mouth of two or three Witnesses shall every Word be established*; which are the very Words of our Saviour, *Matth.* xviii. 16. when he instituted the Power of Censuring; and then *verse* 10. he tells them, *that he wrote these Things being absent, lest being present he should use Severity, according to the Power which the Lord had given them to Edification, and not to Destruction*; by which it is plain, he means the Power of Excommunicating: and 1 *Cor.* iv. 21. he threatens to *come to them with a Rod*; that is, to chastise them with the *Censures* of the Church; and with this Rod, as he himself tells us, he chastised *Hymenæus* and *Alexander*, two stickling Hereticks in the Church of *Ephesus*, whom *he delivered unto Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme*, 1 Tim. i. xx. and as he frequently executed the *Censures* of the Church in his *own* Person, so he *derived* this *Spiritual Jurisdiction* to *Timothy* and *Titus*, whom he ordained *Apostles* or *Bishops* of the Church of *Ephesus* and *Crete*; for so he orders *Timothy*, *against an Elder receive not an Accusation but before two or three Witnesses*; which plainly implies his *Authority* to examine and try the *Causes* even of the *Elders* themselves, when they were accused, and to *punish* them if he found them guilty; for so it follows, *Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear*, 1 Tim. v. 19, 20. so also he exhorts *Titus* to exercise this his Spiritual Jurisdiction; *A Man that is an Heretick, after the first and second Admonition, reject*, Tit. iii. 10. which plainly implies, that he had an Authority *inherent* in him, as he was the *Apostle* or *Bishop* of *Crete*, to *cite, examine, admonish* and *censure* Persons of erroneous Principles: And the same Authority, it is evident, was inherent in the *Angels* or *Bishops* of the Seven Churches of *Asia*. Thus the Bishop of *Ephesus* had Authority to try such as said *they were Apostles and were not*, and to convict them for *Liars*, Rev. ii. 2. and the Bishop of *Pergamus* is blamed for *tolerating* the Sect of the *Nicolaitans* in his Church, *ver.* 14, 15. and so also is the Bishop of *Thyatria*, for *suffering that Woman* Jezabel, *ver.* 20. which plainly implies, that the Authority of *curbing* and *correcting* those profligate Sectaries, was *inherent* in them; else why should they be *blamed* any more than others, for not *restraining* them? From all which it is evident, that the Power of Christian Jurisdiction was *originally* seated in the *Apostolate*; and that throughout the *Apostolick Age* it was always exercised by such, and only such, as were admitted into that *Sovereign Order*, *viz.* either by the Twelve *prime Apostles*, or by those *secondary Apostles*

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whom they ordained *Bishops* of particular Churches; and accordingly we find in the Primitive Ages the *Bishops* were the *sole* Administrators of this Spiritual *Jurisdiction*, and though *ordinarily* they administred it with the Advice and Concurrence of their *Presbytery*, yet this was more than they thought themselves *obliged* to; for thus St. *Cyprian*, in the Time of his Recess, did by his own *single Authority* excommunicate *Felicissimus*, *Augendus*, and others of his Presbyters, *Ep.* 38, 39. and when *Rogatianus*, a Bishop of his Metropolitick Church, complained to him in a Synod of a disorderly *Deacon*, he tells him, that *pro Episcopatûs vigore & Cathedræ authoritate*, *i. e.* by his own Episcopal Authority, without appealing to the Synod, he might have chastised him. And the Fifth Canon of the First *Nicene* Council plainly shews, that it was then the Judgment of the Catholick Church, that the Power of *Spiritual Jurisdiction* was *wholly* seated in the *Bishops*; for it decrees, that in every Province there should be twice a Year a *Council of Bishops*, to examine whether any Person, Lay or Clergy, had been unjustly *excommunicated* by his Bishop; which shews, that then this Sentence was inflicted by the *Bishop only*; though afterwards, to prevent Abuses, it was decreed in the Council of *Carthage*, that *the Bishop should hear no Man's Cause but in the Presence of his Clergy*; *and that his Sentence should be void, unless it were confirmed by their Presence*; but yet still the Sentence was peculiarly *his*, and not his *Clergies*. In some Churches, indeed, the *Bishops* did many times *delegate* Power to their *Presbyters*, both to excommunicate and absolve (as perhaps St. *Paul* himself did in the Church of *Corinth*;) but in this Case the Presbyter was only the *Bishop's Mouth*, and his Sentence received all its Force from that *Episcopal Authority* he was armed with.

IV. Another *peculiar* Ministry of the *Bishops* and *Governours* of the Church, is to *confirm* such as have been baptized and instructed in Christianity; which Ministry was always performed by *Prayer* and *laying on of Hands*, upon which the Party so *confirmed* received the Gift of the *Holy Ghost*. It is true, upon the *first Institution* of this Imposition of Hands, the *extraordinary* Gifts of the Spirit, such as speaking with Tongues, &c. were many times consequent; but from hence it doth no more follow, that it was intended only for an *extraordinary Ministry* that was to *cease* with those extraordinary *Gifts* that accompanied it, than that *Preaching* was so which at first was also attended with *miraculous Operations*. The great Intendment of those extraordinary Effects, was to attest the *Efficacy* of the Function; and doth it therefore follow, that the *Function* must *cease*, because those *extraordinary* Effects did so, after they had *sufficiently* attested its Efficacy, and consequently were of no farther *use*? If so, then all the *other* Ministries of Christianity must be expired as well as this. And what though those *extraordinary* Gifts of the Spirit are *ceased*? Yet since our Saviour hath promised a *continual* Communication of his Spirit to his Church, is it not highly reasonable to believe, that he *still continues* to communicate it by the very same Ministry of *Prayer* and *Imposition of Hands*, whereby he communicated it at *first*; and that he *now* derives to us the *ordinary* Operations of it in the same way that he *first* derived th[e] *extraordinary* ones? Especially considering that this *laying on of Hands* is placed by the Apostle in the same Class with *Baptism*, and made one of the *Principles of the Doctrine of Christ*, Heb. vi. 1, 2. and therefore must without all doubt be intended for a *standing Ministry* in the Church, and as such the Church of Christ in all Ages has thought herself obliged to *receive* and *practise* it; but as for the Administration of it, it was always *appropriated* to the *Apostles* and *Bishops*. So in *Acts* xix. 5, 6. it was St. *Paul* that laid his Hands on the *Ephesians* after they were baptized in the Name of Jesus, whereupon it is said, that the *Holy Ghost came upon them*; and in *Acts* viii. we read, that when St. *Philip* by his Preaching and Miracles had converted the *Samaritans*, and afterwards baptized them, St. *Peter* and St. *John*, two of the Apostles, were sent to *lay Hands* on them, upon which it is said, that *they received the Holy Ghost*, ver. 17. by which it appears, that this Ministry of *Confirmation* appertained to the *Apostles*; since

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St. *Philip*, though a worker of *Miracles*, a *Preacher*, a *prime Deacon*, and if we may believe St. *Cyprian*, one of the Seventy-two *Disciples*, would not presume to assume it, but left it to the *Apostles* as their *peculiar* Province: And accordingly in the Primitive Church it was always performed by the Hands of the *Bishops*; for though from *later* Ages some probable Instances are produced of some *Presbyters*, that *confirm'd* in the *Bishop's Absence*, or by his *Delegation*; yet in all Primitive Antiquity we have neither any one *Canon* for it, nor *Example* of it; from whence we may fairly conclude, that this Imposition of Hands for *Confirmation* was *peculiar* to the *Apostles*, in the Original, and to their *Successors* the *Bishops* in the Continuation of it.

SECT. XI.

Of Christ's Regal Acts in his Kingdom.

HAVING in the foregoing Section given an Account of the several *Ministers* which Christ imploys in the Administration of his Kingdom; we proceed in the next place to enquire what those *Acts of Royalty* are, which he himself exerts in his Kingdom, and by which he perpetually rules and governs it; and these may be distributed into three Orders:

First, Such as he hath performed *once* for all.

Secondly, Such as he hath *always* performed, and will still continue to perform.

Thirdly, Such as are *yet to be* performed by him before the Surrender of his Kingdom.

First, One Sort of the *Royal Acts* of our Saviour, are those which he hath performed *once* for all; and these are reducible to three Particulars.

1. His giving *Laws* to his Kingdom.
2. His Mission of the *Holy Spirit* to subdue Mens Minds to the Obedience of those Laws, and to govern them by them.
3. His erecting an *External Polity* or *Form* of *Government* in his Kingdom.

I. One of those *Regal Acts*, which Christ hath performed in his Kingdom *once* for all, is giving *Laws* to it; and this he performed while he was upon Earth in those excellent *Sermons* and *Discourses* which he then preached and delivered to the World. For though he preached as a *Prophet*, yet it was as a *Royal Prophet*, as one that had *Regal* Authority to *Enact* what he delivered into *Laws*; for he was a King while he was upon Earth, *vide* p. 853, 854, &c. so that all his *Prophecies* were inforced with his *Regal Authority*, and he *commanded* as he was a *King* whatsoever he *taught* as he was a *Prophet*. Indeed, had he been a *mere Prophet*, he could not have *obliged* Men by any *Legislative Authority* of his own to believe and obey him; his *Declarations* had had no farther Force in them than as they expressed the Will and Command of the *Almighty Sovereign* of the World; and if what he declared had not been *Law before*, it could not have been *made Law* by *his declaring* it. But being a *Royal Prophet*, his Words were *Laws*, and all his Declarations carried a *commanding* Power in them. And hence the Gospel is called the *Law of Christ*, Gal. vi. 2. and *the Law of the Spirit of Life* in or *by Christ Jesus*, Rom. viii. 2. and that Command of loving our Neighbour as our self is called the *Royal Law*, *i. e.* the Law of Christ our King, *Jam.* ii. 8. for this our Saviour calls *his Commandment*, John xv. 12. and *his new Commandment*, viz. *that ye love one another even as I have loved you*, John xiii. 34. and not only this, but all other Duties of the Gospel are called *his Commandments*, *John* xiv. 21. and *Mat.* xxviii. 20. by all which it is evident, that in revealing his Gospel to the World he did not only perform the Part of a *Prophet*, but also of a *Legislator*, and that by his own *inherent* Authority; as he was a *King*, he stamp'd those *Doctrines* into *Laws*, which he taught and deliver'd as a Prophet. And such as his *Kingly Power* is, such are his *Laws* and *Commandments*;

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he is a *Spiritual* King, a King of *Souls*, of *Wills*, and of *Affections*, and accordingly his Laws are *Spiritual*, and do extend their Obligation to the Souls, and Wills, and Affections of his Subjects. For they not only oblige our *outward* Man, but also the *inmost* Motions of our Heart; they lay their Reins upon our *Thoughts* and *Desires*, as well as upon our *Words* and *Actions*, and give Directions to our inward *Intentions*, as well as to our outward *Actions:* So that to satisfy their Demands, it is not sufficient that we do well, unless we also *intend* well; that the *Matter* of our Actions be good, unless the *Aim* and *Design* of them be so also: For according to the Tenor of these *Spiritual* Laws, a bad *Intention* unconsecrates the best *Actions*, and converts even our *Prayers* and our *Alms* into the most loathsome *Cheats* and *Dissimulations*, vid. *Matth.* vi. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 16, 17, 18. and as they oblige our inward *Intentions* to good Ends, so they also restrain our inward *Concupiscence* from evil Objects, so far forth at least as it falls under the Command and Disposal of our Wills. For they not only forbid us the *doing* of evil Actions, but also the *consenting* to them, and even the taking *pleasure* in the Contemplation of them; and the very *Affection* to any bad Action, if it be voluntary and consented to, is in the Construction of these Laws the same with the *Commission* of it; for so *Hatred* is construed *Murder*, 1 John iii. 15. *Covetousness*, *Theft* or *Robbery*, Mark vii. 22. *inordinate lusting* after a Woman, *Adultery*, Matth. v. 28. and so in general the wicked *Will* is, in the Construction of these Laws, the wicked *Action* it chuses and consents to. Thus the Laws of our Saviour (to whose all-seeing Eye our *inmost* Motions are as obvious as our most *open* Practice) do as well take notice of our vicious *Affections*, those internal *Springs* and *Fountains* of Iniquity, as of the vicious *Actions* which stream out from them; and we are as well accountable to them for harbouring the *Desire* of Sin, when we have not the Convenience or Opportunity to *act* it, for consenting to it (though we never commit it) whenever Opportunity occurs, yea, and for indulging to ourselves the *phantastick Pleasures* of sinful Meditations, which are but the *antepasts* of the *Actions*, and as the Twilight to a dark Night, but the first *Approaches* toward the Deeds of Darkness, as for the *sinful Actions* themselves. This therefore is the common Nature of the Laws of our Saviour, that they are all of them *Spiritual*, and do in the first Place lay hold upon our *Wills*, and bind our *inward Man*, and from thence extend their Obligation to the *outward Actions*. They begin with that which is the *Principle* of all moral Good and Evil, and by rectifying the Spring and Wheels of our *Will* and *Affections* within, communicate a regular Motion to the Hand of our *Practice* without.

But for our better understanding the *Nature* of these *Laws* and the *Obligations* they devolve upon us, it will be necessary to consider them more particularly, they being all reducible under two Heads: *First*, the Law of *Perfection:* And *secondly*, the Law of *Sincerity*. Both which require of us the *same* Instances of *Piety* and *Virtue*, though not in the *same Degree*, nor under the *same Penalty*.

I. There is the Law of *Perfection*, which requires the *utmost* Degrees of every *Christian Virtue*, which in the several States and Periods of our Lives, we are capable of attaining to. For so we are enjoined not only to *do*, but *to abound in the Work of the Lord:* not only to *have* Grace, but to *grow* in it, to *perfect Holiness in the Fear of the Lord*, and to *be perfect as our Father in Heaven is perfect*. For the Nature of *God* is the *Standard* of that *Perfection* whereunto we are obliged to aspire, and our Growth in Piety and Virtue is never to come to a Period, till we *are pure as he is pure*; *and holy as he is holy*, *i. e.* till we are arrived to *infinite Holiness*, which because our *finite Nature* can never do in any Period of Duration, therefore we are to be *growing on* to Eternity. So that this Law by prescribing *no Limits* to the Degrees of our Growth, hath cut out Work enough for us to imploy *all* our Faculties *for ever*. Not that it is a *Sin* against it for a Man to be *short* or *defective* of the *utmost* Degree of *Perfection*; for it requires no more of us than what is within our *present Possi-*

bility, which always increases proportionably to our present *Improvements*. When we are arrived but to *one* degree of Virtue, it is no *Sin* against this Law of *Perfection* that we do not thence immediately ascend to *six* or *seven*, because it is not in our Power, and no Law can oblige to an *Impossibility*; but when we have acquired *one*, that gives us Power to acquire a *second*, and that a *third*, and so on *ad infinitum*. Thus our *Obligation* to be more and more perfect, *increases* proportionably to the *Improvement* of our Power; for the *End* of all Power either to *be* good or to *do* good, is to *be* good, and to *do* good; and therefore the *more* Power we have to be good, the *better* we ought to be, otherwise our Power is in vain. While we are but *Babes* in Christ, or *Beginners* in Religion, we have not that *Strength* and *Power* as when we are *Men*, and have made a considerable *Progress*; and therefore we are not *then* obliged to *all* those Degrees of Growth and Perfection, but whatsoever Degree is within our *Power* in the indifferent Stages of our Growth and *Progress*, that we are actually and immediately *obliged* to; and so long as we are defective in *it*, we are *Offenders* against the Law of *Perfection*. As for Example, *Mark* xii. 13. our Saviour commands us to *love the Lord our God with all our Heart, with all our Soul, with all our Mind, and with all our Strength*; that is, that we should always love him as much as we *can*; but it is as much in our Power to love him *still more*, when we love *much*, as when we love him *little*: And so we are equally bound still to love him as much as we *can*, when we have *ten* Degrees of *Power*, as we were when we had but *one*. So that by this Command we are obliged always to love God as much as we are *able*, and thereby to be always *augmenting* our Ability to love him, and as our Ability *increases*, to be always loving him *more* and *more* for ever. Now the *Penalty* by which this Law obliges us, is not *eternal Damnation*, (and God forbid it should, for then I doubt no Flesh would be saved) but only *the Depravation* of some *degrees* of future *Happiness*, which is no more than what is the *natural* Consequence of all *Defects* of *Goodness*; for so essential is *Goodness* to our future *Happiness*, that proportionably as we fall short of the *one*, we must necessarily be defective of the *other*; and accordingly the Scripture tells us, that proportionably to our *non-improvements* in this Life, God will *substract* from our *reward* in the Life to come. *For he that soweth sparingly*, saith the Apostle, *shall reap sparingly, and he that soweth abundantly shall reap abundantly*, 2 Cor. ix. 6. And our Saviour by a Parable, doth expressly teach us, that our future *Reward* shall be *apportioned* to the Degrees of our present *Improvements*, Luke xix. where he represents himself as a *Master* coming to take Account of his Servants, among whom he had intrusted a Stock of ten Pounds, delivering to every one an equal Share. The first by an *extraordinary Diligence* had improv'd *his* Pound into ten, and he is rewarded *accordingly* with the Government of ten Cities, *verse* 16, 17. the other had been *faithful*, though not altogether so *diligent*, and by his *one* Pound had gained *five*, and accordingly he is made Lord of *five* Cities, *verse* 18, 19. By which he plainly declares, that by *so much* as we fall *short* of those *Improvements* we might have made in Piety and Virtue, *so much* he will *substract* from our future *Reward*. So that the Sense of the Law of Perfection is this, as you would not incur the *Forfeiture* of some *degrees* of your *Happiness* in the other Life, be sure you imploy your *utmost Diligence* in this, to *improve* yourselves in every Grace and Virtue of *Religion*.

II. There is the Law of *Sincerity*, which requires the *Being* and *Reality* of all Christian Graces and Virtues in us, together with the proper *Acts* and *Exercises* of them, as we have Opportunity, and doth no farther forbid those *gradual Defects* of them, which are within our *possibility* to supply, than as they are the Effects of our gross, continued, and wilful *Neglect*, and so inconsistent with *Sincerity*. Now the *Reality* of these Christian Virtues in us, consists in the universal and prevailing *Consent* and *Resolution* of our *Wills*, to regulate our Practice by them, so as not *wilfully* to admit of any Thing that is *contrary* to them upon any Occasion or Temptation whatsoever; and so long as this Re-

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ſolution continues *firm* and *prevails* in our Practice, we are *juſt* in the Eye and Judgment of this Law of *Sincerity*, though we do not always exert it to the *utmoſt* of our poſſibility. He therefore who hath ſo ſubmitted his Will to God, as to be *throughly reſolved*, without any *Reſerve*, to obey him, and not to do any thing that is contrary to his Will, either againſt Knowledge, or through affected Ignorance, or Inconſideration, hath in this Reſolution the *real Being* of all Chriſtian Virtues in him; and ſo long as this *holds*, he ſtands uncondemned in the Judgment of the Law of *Sincerity*. But though this *Reſolution* includes in it the *Being* and *Reality* of all Chriſtian Virtue, yet doth it not include the *utmoſt poſſibility* of it; nor doth it at all follow, that becauſe I am *ſincerely* reſolved to conduct my Life by the Laws of *Piety* and *Virtue*, therefore I muſt be in all reſpects as *pious* and *virtuous* as it is *poſſible* for me to be, conſidering my préſent State and Circumſtances. I may be *ſincerely* reſolved, and yet not be always equally *diligent* and *active*. I may *now* be exceeding *vigilant* and *watchful*, and what I am *now* I may *always* be, if I *always* exert the *utmoſt* of my poſſibility; yet it may ſo happen *anon*, that though I am ſincerely reſolved *ſtill*, I may be more *remiſs*, *ſupine*, and *inadvertent*, and in this Poſture a Temptation may *ſurprize* me, before I am aware, and hurry me into an Action againſt which I am *firmly reſolved:* And there is no doubt, but even the *beſt* of Men might have been much *better* than they are, had they always kept pace with their *poſſibilities*, and applied themſelves with their *utmoſt* Skill and Diligence to the Methods and Miniſtries of *Improvement*. Now though not to exert our *utmoſt* Power in the *Avoidance* of Evil, and the *Improvement* of ourſelves in Virtue and Goodneſs, is doubtleſs a *Sin*, yet it is only a *Sin* againſt the Law of *Perfection*, the *Penalty* of which is only *deprivation* of ſome *degree* of our future *Reward*; but ſo long as we keep up a *prevailing* Reſolution in our Wills to govern our Lives by the Laws of *Piety* and *Virtue*, we ſtand *clear* in the Eye of the Law of *Sincerity*, the *Penalty* of which is no leſs than *everlaſting Exile* from the Preſence of *God* into the dark and horrible Regions of endleſs *Miſery* and *Deſpair*; only this Proviſo it admits, that if after we have ſinned againſt it, we *reaſſume* our good Reſolution, and heartily *repent* and *amend*, we ſhall be *releaſed* from the Obligation to this dreadful Penalty, and be *reſtored* to that happy State of Grace and Favour, from whence we fell by our Tranſgreſſion. So that the great Difference between the Law of *Perfection* and the Law of *Sincerity* is this, that the *Penalty* of the latter is much more *ſevere:* But the *Duty* of the former much more *comprehenſive*. Having thus given this brief Account of our Saviour's *Legiſlation* and *Laws*, I proceed to the

II. Of thoſe *Regal Acts* which Chriſt hath performed in his Kingdom *once* for all, and that is, his *Miſſion* of the *Holy Spirit* to ſubdue Mens Minds to the Obedience of his Laws, and to govern them by them. For ſo the Apoſtle makes the *Miſſion* of the *Spirit* to ſucceed the *triumphal* Progreſs of our Saviour to his *Coronation* in Heaven, *Eph.* iv. 8. *He aſcended up on high, he led captivity captive, he gave Gifts unto Men*; where, by the *Gifts* which he gave, we are to underſtand the *Holy Spirit*, and in *him* all thoſe *extraordinary Gifts* which he poured out upon his Church on the Day of *Pentecoſt*; for ſo *Acts* ii. 33. St. *Peter* makes the Effuſion of the Spirit by Chriſt to be the Conſequence of his Advancement to his univerſal Royalty, *therefore being by the right Hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the Promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, he hath ſhed forth this which ye now ſee and hear.* Now the *End* for which he ſent his Spirit, was to ſupply his Room when he went from Earth, and in his Abſence, to preſide as his *Vicegerent* in his Kingdom below. *vid. p.* 587, 588, &c. Since therefore this *bleſſed Spirit* acts as our Saviour's *Agent*, whatſoever *he* doth, that our Saviour doth *by* him. So that all thoſe Operations *he* performs, in order to the ſubduing us to the Obedience of Chriſt, and to the governing of us when we are ſubdued, are truly the Operations of *Chriſt himſelf*. It is *he* that conquers and governs us by *his Spirit*, our Hearts are the Territories which

Chriſt

Christ invades by *him*, and *his* Inspirations are the *Victorious Arms* by which Christ conquers and subdues them. Our Wills are the Thrones on which Christ sits, and rules, and governs by *him*, and his holy Suggestions are the *awful Powers* by which Christ himself commands our Obedience. But what it is that this *blessed Spirit* doth, and hath done in order to the subduing Men to Christ's Laws, and governing them by them, hath been already shewn at large, *vide* p. 599, *&c.* And therefore of this I shall need say no more at present.

III. And *lastly*, Therefore, another of those *Regal Acts* which Christ hath *once* for all performed in his heavenly Kingdom is, his erecting in it an *external Polity* and *Government*. What this *Polity* is, and what are the *Functions* of it, hath been shewn at large, and it is as well by this *external* Government, as by the *internal* Ministry of his Spirit, that Christ *now* rules his Kingdom; for in all just and lawful Things, the lawful Governors of his Church do act by *his* Commission and Authority, as being substituted by *him* the visible Representatives of *his* Person, and the Executors and Administrators of *his* Power and Dominion. Whilst therefore they act within the Compass of their *Commission*, they act in *his* Stead, and as *his* Vicegerents; and whatsoever they *bind* he *binds*, and whatsoever they *loose* he *looses*; their Commands are *his*, their Decrees and Sentences are *his*, and all their authoritative Acts carry with them the *same Force* and *Obligation*, as if they had been performed by *him* in his *own Person*, For it is *he* that *wills* and *speaks*, and *acts* by them, because they will, and speak, and act by *his* Authority. For so he himself declares to them, *Luke* x. 16. *He that heareth you heareth me*; *i. e.* because I speak by you, *and he that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me*; because *my* Authority is in *you* even as my *Father* is in *me*; and therefore he who despises *mine* in *you*, despises my *Father's* in *me*, whence mine in you is *derived*. *Your* Authority is *mine*, and *mine* is my *Father's*, and therefore he who rejects *yours* doth therein reject both my *Father's* and *mine*. And this Authority is given *them* by *Christ* for the *same End*, that his Authority was given *him* by the *Father*; for he came into the World *to seek and to save lost Souls*, Luke xix. 10. *He came not to judge the World, but to save the World*, John xii. 47. and *to call Sinners to Repentance*, Mark ii. 17. And upon the very *same* Errand he sent all those whom he appointed to *propagate* and *govern* his Kingdom in his Absence; for he set them up as so many *Lights* to the benighted World, to reduce Men from those dangerous Paths in which they were wandering to eternal *Misery*, and shew them the Way to everlasting *Happiness*; and all the Power he devolved upon them was for *Edification*, and not for *Destruction*, 2 *Cor.* xiii. 10. and to them he hath committed the Care and Charge of *Souls*, whose Blood he will one Day require at their Hands, if they miscarry through *their* Neglect or Default, *Heb.* xiii. 17. And that he might the better *secure* these precious Beings, for whom he shed his Blood from miscarrying for ever, he placed this *spiritual Polity* in a *Subordination* of Officers, and made the Inferiour accountable for their Charge to the superior Officers, as well as both accountable to himself. So that whereas had he placed it in *co-ordinate* Hands, there had been only *one* Soul accountable to him for each particular Cure or Charge of Souls, because then each *single* Pastor would have been *supreme* in his particular Cure, and consequently no *other* Pastor, or Pastors, would have been accountable for not calling him to account; now each particular Cure of Souls is under the Charge and Inspection of several *Orders* and *Degrees* of Pastors; who in their several Stations are *all* accountable for it to the Tribunal of Christ. For first, the *inferior* Pastor, who hath the *immediate* Charge of it, and is obliged by his Office to *teach* and *instruct* it by good Example and Doctrine, and to *administer* to it the holy Ordinances of Christianity, stands accountable to Christ for *every* Soul in it that miscarries through his *Neglect* or *Omission*; next, the *Bishop* stands accountable for not *correcting* the Neglects and Misdemeanors of the *inferior*

 Pastor,

Pastor, and then the *Metropolitan* for not taking *Cognizance* of the Default of the Bishop. Thus in that *excellent Form* of Government which Christ hath established in his Kingdom, he hath made all possible Provision for the Safety and Welfare of *Souls*; for according to this *Oeconomy* he hath taken no less than a *threefold* Security, every one of which is as much as a Soul amounts to, that *every Soul* within every Cure shall be plentifully supplied with the Means of Salvation; that so none of them might miscarry but such as are incorrigibly obstinate. So that now if *any* Soul, within the Dominion of our Saviour, perish for want of the Means of Salvation, there are no less than *three* Souls one after another, besides it self, *accountable* to him for its Ruin. Having thus shewn what these *Regal Acts* are which Christ hath *once* for all performed in his Kingdom; I proceed,

II. To declare what those *Regal Acts* are which he *hath* always performed, and doth always continue to perform: And these are reducible to four Particulars.

First, His *pardoning* penitent Sinners.

Secondly, His *punishing* obstinate Offenders.

Thirdly, His *protecting* and *defending* his faithful Subjects in *this* Life.

Fourthly, His *blessing* and *rewarding* them in the Life *to come*.

I. One of the *Regal Acts* which our Saviour always *hath*, and always *continues* to *perform*, is, his *pardoning* and *forgiving* penitent Sinners; which being one of the Articles of our *Creed*, I shall endeavour to give an Account of it more at large: The Apostle defines Sin to be a *Transgression of the Law*, 1 John iii. 4. Now the Law obliges us under a certain *stated* Penalty to *do* and *forbear* what it *commands* and *forbids*; whenever therefore we *transgress* the Law, we are thereby obliged to undergo the *Penalty* it denounces; and this is that which we call the *Guilt of Sin*, *viz.* its Obligation to Punishment; and it is this *Guilt* which *Pardon* and *Forgiveness* relates to. For to *pardon* is nothing else but only to release the Sinner from the Obligation he lies under to suffer the *Penalty* of the Law. Now the *Penalty* of the Law of God for every known and wilful Sin, is no less than *everlasting Perdition*; and therefore from *this* it is that we are *released* by that *Pardon* and *Indemnity* which the Gospel proposes. So that the *Pardon* or *Remission* of Sins, whereof we are now treating, consists in the *loosing* of sinful Men from that Obligation *to eternal Punishment*, whereunto they have rendered themselves liable by their wilful *Disobedience* to the Law of God. Since therefore this *Pardon* consists in the *Release* of Offenders from the *penal Obligation* of the Law, it must be a *Regal Act*; because the Obligation of the Law can be *dispensed* with by no other *Authority* but that which made it: And therefore since to *make* the Obligation of the Law is an Act of *Regal Authority*, to *release* or *dispense* with it must necessarily be *so* also; and accordingly *forgiveness* of Sin is in Scripture attributed to our Saviour as one of his *Regal Rights*, Acts v. 31. *Him hath God exalted with his right Hand to be a Prince and a Saviour for to give Repentance to Israel, and Forgiveness of Sin.* So that now it is by *Christ* immediately that our Sins are *pardoned*, and our Souls *released* from those Obligations to eternal *Punishment* in which they have involved us: For *the Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son*, John. v. 22. So that now it is by *him* immediately that the Father *judgeth us*, *i. e.* absolves and condemns us; for so *Col.* iii. 13. the Apostle exhorts them to *forbear and forgive one another, even as Christ forgave them.* And *Col.* ii. 13. Christ is said to *have forgiven them all Trespasses.* It is true, Forgiveness of Sin is in Scripture frequently attributed to the *Father* as well as to the *Son:* So 1 *John* i. 9. *If we confess our Sins, he* (*i. e.* the Father) *is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*; and *Eph.* iv. 32. *Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's Sake hath forgiven you.* From whence it is plain, that *Forgiveness* of Sin appertains to *God* as well as *Christ*, and that both have their *appropriate* Shares in it; and therefore since it is impossible that the same *individual* Action should proceed from *two distinct Agents*, in this Act of *Forgiveness* the *Father* must

must do something which the *Son* doth not, and the *Son* must do something which the *Father* doth not. They must both of them act an appropriate Part in it, and each have a *distinct* Agency from each other. For the fuller Explication therefore of this Article, I shall endeavour to shew, *First*, what it is which the *Father* doth in forgiving Sins; and *Secondly*, what the *Son* doth.

I. What it is that the *Father* doth in this Act of Forgiveness of Sin? To which in short I answer, That the *Father*'s Part herein is to make a *general Grant* of Pardon to Offenders, upon such a *Consideration* as he shall think meet to accept, and with such a *Limitation* and *Restriction* as he shall think fit to make; which *general Grant* is nothing else but those glad Tydings of the *Gospel*, which he proclaimed to the World by Jesus Christ; *viz.* that in Consideration of *Christ's Death* and *Sacrifice*, he would freely forgive all penitent and believing Sinners their personal Obligation to eternal Punishment, and receive them into Grace and Favour. So that in forgiving our Sins, there are these three Things *peculiar* to God the *Father*: *First*, his making a *general Grant* of Pardon to us. *Secondly*, his making it in *Consideration* of Christ's Death and Sacrifice: *Thirdly*, his making it with those *Restrictions* and *Limitations* of Faith and Repentance.

First, One thing *peculiar* to God the Father in forgiving Sins is, his making a *general Grant* of Pardon and Forgiveness to Sinners. For the Law against which all Men had sinned, and by which they were obliged to eternal Punishment, was strictly and properly the Law of *God* the *Father*, who being the *first* and *supreme* Person in the *Godhead*, was consequently always the *first* and *supreme* in the *Divine Dominion*. Now the *Divine Dominion* consisting (even as all other Dominions do) of a *Legislative* and *Executive* Power, the *Father* must be *supreme* in *both*, and consequently the *Laws* of the Divine Dominion must be more *especially* and *peculiarly* his. And hence it is called, *The Will of the Father*, Matth. vii. 21. so in the Lord's Prayer, the Divine Law is in a *peculiar* manner styled the Will of God the Father: *Thy Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven*; Matth. xii. 50. our Saviour styles it, *the Will of his Father which is in Heaven*: and elsewhere the Commandment of his *Father*, vide *John* xii. 5. *Matth.* xv. 3, 6. *Mark* vii. 8, 9. by all which it is evident, that the *Divine Law*, against which we have all offended, and by which we are obliged to Punishment, is *appropriately* and *peculiarly* the Will and Commandment of *God the Father*; and it being so, the Right of *exacting* or *remitting* the Punishment of this Law, must be *peculiarly* and *appropriately* inherent in him. For the Penalty of the Law is due to him whose Law it is, and it is he alone can *loose* us from it who *bound* it upon us; so that it was the *Father*'s Peculiar, as to *give* the Law, so to *indemnify* Offenders from the Penalty of it; and accordingly we find that publick *Grant* of *Pardon*, which through Jesus Christ is made to Sinners, is in Scripture every where attributed to the *Father*; so we are told, that it is *God* who *for Christ's sake hath forgiven us*, Ephes. iv. 32. And that it is *God* who *hath set forth Christ to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness for the Remission of Sins that are past, that he might be just, and the Justifier of them that believe in Jesus*, Rom. ii. 25, 26. that it was *God* who *was in Christ reconciling the World to himself, not imputing their Trespasses unto them*, 2 Cor. v. 19. And in a Word, that it is God who *is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness*, 1 John i. 9. where his being *faithful and just*, plainly refers to some publick *Grant* and *Promise*, by which he hath *obliged himself* to penitent Offenders. And indeed the whole *new Covenant*, in which this publick *Grant* of Remission of *Sins* is contained (*vide* Heb. viii. 12.) is the Act and Deed of *God the Father*: It was *he* that in Consideration of Christ's Death and Sacrifice granted this grand *Charter of Mercy* to the World; for seeing it was to the *Father* that that Sacrifice was *offered*, in Consideration of *which the new Covenant* was granted, (*vide Ephes.* iv. 2. compared with *Col.* i. 20.) the Grant of it must necessarily be from the *Father*. And as it was the Father that *made* this publick Grant of Remission to Sinners; so

II. It

II. It was he that made it in *Consideration* of Christ's Death and Sacrifice; for so Christ himself tells us, that it was by *commandment which he received from his Father, that he laid down his Life,* John x. 17, 18. and when he was going to offer up himself upon the Cross, he tells his Disciples, *As the Father gave me Commandment, even so do I; arise, let us go hence, i. e.* to execute that Command which the Father hath given me, to *lay down my Life for the Sheep,* John x. 15. from whence it is evident, that it was the *Father* who exacted the Death and Sacrifice of Christ in consideration of that publick Grant of Forgiveness which he made to the World; for it was *through his Blood that we have Redemption, the Forgiveness of Sins, according to the Riches of his* (i. e. the Father's) *Grace,* Ephes. i. 7. and that Blood of his was *an Offering and a Sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour,* Ephes. v. 2. So that it was God the Father that did both *exact* and *accept* the Sacrifice of Christ, which as I have shewed at large, *Sect.* 4. was in consideration of his pardoning and forgiving Sinners.

III. And *lastly,* It was *God the Father* also, that made this Grant of Forgiveness to us with these *Restrictions* and *Limitations* of our believing and repenting. For as the *Promises* of the Covenant were *his,* in which Remission of Sin is proposed to us, so must the *Conditions* of it be also, by which it is *limited* and *restrained.* Because it can belong to none but the *Giver* to limit and conditionate his *own* Gifts and Grants: Now the *Conditions* of our Forgiveness are *Faith* and *Repentance;* or rather, the Condition of it is such a Faith, such a *lively* and *active* Belief in Jesus Christ, as doth beget in us *sincere Repentance* and *Renovation* of Life: For so St. *Paul* tells us again and again, that it is by *Faith* that we are justified or pardoned, *Rom.* iii. 28. *c.* v. *v.* 1. *Gal.* ii. 16. *Chap.* iii. 24. Where by *Faith* it is evident he doth not mean any one *single* Act of Faith, of what kind or denomination soever, but *Faith,* as it is the *pregnant Root* and *active Principle* of *Repentance* and *Newness* of Life. For it is granted on all Hands, that that *Faith* which acquits and justifies us before God, must be *lively* and *operative;* and indeed unless it be so, it is not distinguishable from *Presumption,* which is only the Carcass or lifeless Image and Portraiture of Faith. So that if *this* be justifying, it is all one whether you call it justifying *Faith* or justifying *Presumption;* and he that can lay hold on the Righteousness of Christ, though it be with *prophane* and *sacrilegious* Hands, will be as certainly justified as the most *humble* and *penitent* Soul. At which rate a Man may *rest* upon Christ without coming *to* him, and *lay hold* upon him at the greatest Distance *from* him; he may lean upon his Merits in open Defiance to his *Laws,* and *embrace* and *crucify* him together. It being granted therefore, that that Faith which justifies us must be *lively* and *operative;* it is from hence most evident, that the *Condition* of our Justification is no one *single* Act of Faith, but comprehends in it all that *Repentance* and new *Obedience,* which is the Effect of the *Life* and *Operation* of Faith. For if to make it the Condition of our Justification, it be necessary that our *Faith should work by* Love, and be operative and obediential; then that it should be *lively* and *operative,* is as necessary to our Justification as that it should be *Faith;* for where only an *Accident* or *Mode* of a Thing is made a Condition with the Thing, it is *equally* a Condition with the Thing itself. As for Instance, if I promise one such a Reward, upon Condition he presents me with such a Book, *so bound* and of *such* an *Edition;* it is *equally* a Condition, and as much influential on the Man's Right to my *Promise,* that it should be *so bound,* and of *such an Edition,* as that it should be the *Book* for which I condition: And so in any other Instance you can bring, either in Fact or Fiction; and the same Reason holds good, whether we take Faith for a *Condition* or an *Instrument* (as some improperly enough call it) for if to be *lively* and *operative* is a *necessary* Qualification to make Faith an *Instrument* of our Justification, then its *Liveliness* and *Operation* is *instrumental* to it: For that *Mode* of a Thing which makes it instrumental, is as really *instrumental* as the Thing itself. As for Instance, a *Knife* is an Instrument of cutting, but it is its *Sharpness* that makes it to be so; and therefore it is as instrumental to

cutting

cutting, that it should be *sharp*, as that it should be a *Knife*. And, indeed, whether we consider either the *Form* or *Matter* of our Justification and Pardon, it will evidently appear, that *that Faith* which justifies us, must be such as includes in it *Repentance* and New *Obedience*. For as for the *Form* of Justification, it is a *juridical* Act founded upon a *legal* Process, in which there is always a *Judge*, a *Criminal*, and a *Law*; and here the Judge is *God*, the Criminal, *Man*, the Law, the Law of *Sincerity*, or those affirmative and negative Commands of the Christian Religion, that are established with the Threats of eternal Condemnation; for so *James* ii. 12. the Apostle tells us, that we must be *judged by the Law of Liberty*, i. e. the Moral Law, as it is expounded and perfected by our Saviour; for so *ver.* 8. *If ye fulfil the Royal Law, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself, ye do well.* So that that *Law of Liberty*, by which we must be *judged*, is this *Royal Law*, and this Royal Law, is the *Moral Law*, which requires us to love our Neighbour as ourselves; now this *Moral Law* is to be considered under a *Two-fold* Notion, as it is a Law of *Works*, and as it is a Law of *Grace*. As it is a Law of *Works*, it exacts perfect and unsinning *Obedience*, and neither promises *Grace* to enable us to keep it, nor admits *Repentance*, when we have broken it. As it is a Law of *Grace*, it exacts only *sincere Obedience*, and both promises *Grace* to enable us thereunto, and admits *Repentance*, in case of wilful Disobedience. Now considering it under the *first* Notion, it is the same with the Law of *Nature*, as such, it obliges *all Men*, that are in the State of Nature, or without the Pale of Christianity, who have neither Promise of Grace to enable them to obey, nor yet of Pardon upon Repentance after they have once disobeyed it. In which forlorn Condition, they remain till such Time as they embrace *Christianity*, and are by Baptism admitted into the Kingdom of *Christ*, and from thenceforth the Obligation of it, as it is a Law of *Works*, ceaseth, and it obliges them only as it is a Law of *Grace*, *i. e.* as it is a Law which exacts of them only *sincere Obedience*, and promises both to *assist* them to obey, and upon their *Repentance* to pardon their Disobedience, so that considering the *Moral Law*, as it is a Law of *Works*, it neither *justifies* or accounts just any but the *perfectly* innocent, nor yet indulges *Pardon* to any that have offended upon *any* Condition whatsoever; and therefore the Infidel World, who alone are under the Obligation of it, are said to be *Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no Hope*, *i. e.* no Hope founded upon Promise, none but what an *absolute* and *unpromised* Mercy affords them, *Ephes.* ii. 12. And then if we consider it, as it is a Law of Grace, it justifies or accounts just none but the *sincerely Obedient*, and indulges Pardon to no Offenders whatsoever, but such as are *sincerely penitent*; so that we Christians who alone are under the Obligation of it can neither be justified by it, but upon our *sincere Obedience*, nor when we fail of that be *pardoned* by it, but upon our *unfeigned Repentance*. Since therefore it is by the *Moral Law*, considered as a Law of *Grace*, that God doth judge us, he can acquit us by it upon *no other Terms*, but only our performing of what it *requires*, *i. e.* our hearty *Repentance* for our past Sins, and sincere Obedience for the future. For seeing it requires this of us under the Penalty of *eternal Condemnation*, we are obliged by it to this Penalty, till we have performed what it requires; and to be at the same Time *acquitted* by a Law and *obliged* to the *Penalty* of it, is a Contradiction; did this Law of Grace require of us nothing but *Faith*, and threaten *Condemnation* for nothing but *Infidelity*, then indeed our bare *believing* in Jesus were sufficient to *discharge* us from our Obligation to its Penalty; but since it also requires of us *Repentance* and *sincere Obedience*, under the *same* Penalty that it requires *Faith*, our *Faith* cannot be sufficient to *discharge* us from its Penalty, unless it be such as includes in it *Repentance* and *sincere Obedience*. In short, the Law of *Grace* condemns us as well for *Impiety*, *Injustice* and *Uncharitableness*, as for *Infidelity*; and therefore we cannot be acquitted by it upon forsaking our *Infidelity*, unless we also forsake our *Impiety*, &c. and while we continue in *any one wilful Sin*, for which it condemns, it is impossible,

impoſſible, that at the ſame Time we ſhould be acquitted and pardoned by it; ſo that unleſs our *Faith* be ſuch as doth include in it a *Renunciation* of all *wilful* Sin, or, which is the ſame Thing, *Repentence* and *ſincere Obedience*, we cannot be acquitted upon it by the Law of *Grace.*

And then if we conſider the *Matter* of our Pardon and Remiſſion, which is nothing but a releaſing us from our Obligation to *Puniſhment*, it will from thence alſo appear, that that *Faith upon* which we obtain our Pardon, muſt be ſuch as works in us *ſincere Repentance* and *Obedience.* For the *Puniſhment* to which we are obliged by the Law of *Grace*, conſiſts in the *Loſs of Heaven*, as well as in the poſitive *Torments of Hell*; and therefore our *Pardon* muſt include a *Releaſe* from *both:* But to be releaſed from our Obligation of *loſing Heaven*, is the ſame Thing as to have a Right of *enjoying* it conferr'd upon us: ſo that the Faith upon which we are *pardoned* and *forgiven*, is the Faith upon which we are *intitled* to Heaven, as all agree, includes in it *Repentance* and *ſincere Obedience.* For theſe two Things are of undoubted Certainty, that every Man ſhall go to Heaven that dies *intitled* to it; and that no Man ſhall go to Heaven that *dieth* in *Impenitence*, and *wilful Diſobedience.* For it is our keeping *the Commandments of God that gives us a Right to the Tree of Life*, Rev. xxii. 14. And our keeping God's Commandments, is that *Holineſs without which no Man ſhall ſee God*, Heb. xii. 14. And accordingly in Scripture the Remiſſion of our Sins is attributed to our *Repentance* and *Obedience*, as well as to our *Faith*, ſo *Acts* iii. 19. *Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out, when the Times of refreſhing ſhall come from the Preſence of the Lord.* And in *Eph.* i. 7. *If ye walk in the Light, as he is in the Light, you have Communion with him, and the Blood of Chriſt cleanſeth you from all Sin.* So alſo *Acts* x. 34, 35. *God is no reſpecter of Perſons; but in every Nation, he that feareth him, and worketh Righteouſneſs, is accepted of him.* From whence it is evident, that when the Scripture makes mention of *Faith only* in the Matter of our Juſtification, it is to be underſtood of Faith in the greateſt Latitude, as comprehending *Repentance* and *ſincere Obedience*; for how can we be juſtified by *Faith only*, and yet be juſtified by *Obedience too*, unleſs our Obedience be *included* in our *Faith?* And indeed the Scripture plainly declares, that Faith itſelf is *not at all* available with God, unleſs it be accompanied with ſincere *Obedience.* So *Gal.* v. 6. *In Chriſt Jeſus neither Circumciſion availeth, nor Uncircumciſion, but Faith which worketh by Love*, and what he means by Faith working by Love, he tells us, *Gal.* vi. 16. *Circumciſion is nothing, and Uncircumciſion is nothing, but the new Creature*; and what he means by the new Creature, he alſo tells us, 1 *Cor.* vii. 19. *Circumciſion is nothing, and Uncircumciſion is nothing, but keeping the Commandments of God*; ſo that the only thing which avails us with God, is *Faith working by Love.* Faith working by Love is *the new Creature*, the new Creature is *keeping the Commandments of God*; and in *James* ii. 26. we are told, that *as the Body without the Spirit is dead, ſo Faith alſo is dead without Works*; that is, it is altogether ineffectual. For ſo if you compare the 14 and 17 Verſes of this Chapter, you will find that thoſe two Phraſes, *Faith cannot ſave*, and *Faith is dead*, doth both ſignify the ſame Thing. Since therefore *Faith* itſelf without *Obedience* is *unavailable*, when the Scripture makes mention of our being *juſtified by Faith*, it muſt neceſſarily be underſtood of *Faith comprehending Obedience.*

And thus you ſee what *God* the *Father*'s Part is in remitting our Sins, *viz.* that it conſiſts in granting to us an univerſal Act of *Pardon* and *Indemity*, in *Conſideration* of our Saviour's Sacrifice, and upon *Condition* of our ſincere Repentance and future Obedience. And this is the *Ground-work* and *Foundation* of all Remiſſion of Sins; without which our *Saviour* himſelf hath *no Right* to pardon and forgive us; for ſince the Law, againſt which we have all ſinned, was *peculiarly* from God the Father, as he is the *Fountain* of Divinity, and conſequently the *Head* of the Divine Dominion, it was *he peculiarly* that was the Party *offended*, and conſequently it was he to whom our Obligation to *Puniſhment* was due, and by whom alone it can be *releaſed* and *remitted*; and

as the *Grant* of Remission was wholly in *his* Will and Pleasure; so was it also to accept the *Consideration* and appoint the *Conditions* of it. So that now as none can be pardoned but upon *his Grant*, so neither can his Grant be available to any, but upon that *Consideration* which he hath accepted, *viz.* the precious *Sacrifice* of his own Son, and upon such *Conditions* as he hath appointed, *viz.* *Faith* working in us *sincere Repentance* and *Obedience*; and accordingly our *Saviour*, in all that he doth in the Part he acts in forgiving Sins, proceeds *upon*, and *according* to this Grant of his *Father*; for 'tis in the Right of and upon the *Consideration* and *Condition* of this Grant that he forgives us, nor can he forgive any by *any other* Right than that which it gives him, or upon any other *Consideration* than that which it hath admitted, or upon any other Condition than that which *it* hath specified and determined. And this brings me to the *second* Head I proposed, which was to shew what it is that the *Son* doth in forgiving Sins.

In short therefore, the Part which our *Saviour* bears in it, consider'd as *King* under God the *Father*, is to make an *actual* and *particular Application* of this *general Grant* of his Father to particular Sinners, upon their *Faith* and *Repentance.* For the *Father's Grant* is only a *general Promise*, that we shall be pardoned for Christ's Sake, whenever we *sincerely believe* and *repent*; but the *actual* pardoning us consists in the *Application* of this general Promise to us in particular, by which the general Promise of Pardon is converted into a *particular* Sentence of Pardon. For the *Promise* says thus, *Whosoever believes* and *repents* shall be pardoned; the particular Application of the Promise says thus, *Thou* doest *believe* and *repent*, and therefore by virtue of that Promise, *I pardon* and *forgive thee*. And this is the *proper Part* of our blessed *Saviour*, who having *first* obtained this Promise of his Father, by his *Sacrifice* upon Earth, and then still *continuing* to obtain of him by his continual *Intercession* in Heaven, *Royal Authority* to *dispense* that Promise to us, *vid. p.* 779, *&c.* doth by virtue of that *Authority* actually *pardon* us upon our *actual Repentance*. So that as soon *as* ever we perform the *Condition* of God's Grant of Pardon, our Saviour (who *knows* the inmost Thoughts of our Hearts, and perfectly *discerns* our Sincerity) *immediately pronounces* our Sentence of Pardon, and by a particular *Application* of that general Grant to us, *absolves* us from our Obligation to eternal *Punishment*, and freely *receives* us into *Grace* and *Favour*. For though the *Completion* and *Publication* of our Pardon is reserved for the Day of Judgment, when we shall be *absolved* from all Punishment, (*i. e.* not only of *eternal* Misery, but also of *corporal* Death and temporal Sufferings) in the publick View and Audience of the World; yet it is certain, that every penitent Believer in Jesus is actually pardoned by him in Heaven, *as soon* as ever he believes and repents; that is, he is, *in foro Christi*, and before the Tribunal of his Royal Judgment, *absolved* from the Obligation to suffer *eternal* Misery which he lay under, during his State of *Impenitence*; and Christ in his own Mind, Judgment and Estimation hath judicially thus pronounced concerning him, *By virtue of my Father's Grant to all penitent Offenders, and of that Royal Authority which he hath committed to me, I freely release thee from all that vast Debt of everlasting Punishment which thou hast too justly incurr'd by sinning against him.* Thus as the *Father* forgives us *virtually* by that *publick* Grant of Mercy, which for Christ's Sake he hath made to all penitent Offenders; so the *Son* forgives us *actually* by that Royal Authority, which the Father hath given him to make a *particular* Application of that his general Grant to us upon our actual *Repentance*; and as it is by the *Father's Grant* that the *Son* pardons us, so it is by the *Son's Application* of it that the *Father* pardons us; and therefore we are said, *in* or *by Christ* to *have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sin*, Col. i. 14. *i. e.* to be forgiven for the Sake of his Blood; in Consideration whereof, God the Father hath given him Power to forgive us; for so he himself tells us, that *all Power in Heaven and Earth was given him*, Matth. xxviii. 18. and there is no doubt but in *all Power*, the Power of forgiving Sins was included; for so St. *Peter* tells us, that

through his Name, i. e. by his Authority or judicial Sentence, *Whosoever believeth in him shall receive Remission of Sins*, Acts x. 43.

And thus you see what the *first Regal* Act is, which our Saviour *hath* always performed, and will always *continue* to perform, *viz.* forgiving of Sins.

II. Another of his *Regal Acts* of this kind, is, *punishing* obstinate Offenders: For as he mediates for his Father, in ruling and governing us, he must be the Minister of his Father's *Providence*; and being so, whatsoever *divine Punishments* are inflicted upon Offenders, are to be look'd upon as the *Strokes* of *his* Hand, and the Ministries of his Power; for *he hath the Keys of Death and Hell, i. e.* the Power of punishing both here and hereafter, *Rev.* i. 18. and accordingly he threatens the corrupt Churches of *Asia*, that *he would remove their Candlestick*, and that *he would fight against them with the Sword of his Mouth*, that *he would come upon them as a Thief*, and that *he would spew them out of his Mouth*, Rev. ii. 5, 3, 16. and *chap.* iii. *ver.* 16. all which is a sufficient Proof, that the *Punishment* of Offenders, both here and hereafter, is committed to him, as a *Branch* of that *Royal Authority* with which he is invested by the Father; in the Execution of which Commission he many Times chastens bad Men in this Life, in order to their Reformation and Amendment; for *as many as I Love*, saith he, *(i. e.* wish well to) *I rebuke and chasten*, Heb. iii. 19. and many Times persecutes them with *exterminating* Judgments, thereby hanging them up in Chains, as it were, as publick *Examples* of his Vengeance, to warn and deter the World from treading in their impious Footsteps. For so he threatens *Jezabel* and her Followers; *I gave her space to repent of her Fornications, and she repented not*; *behold, I will cast her into a Bed*, i. e. into a Bed-rid and irrecoverable Condition, *and them that commit Adultery with her into great Tribulation, and I will kill her Children with Death, and all the Church shall know that I am he which searcheth the Reins and Heart, and I will give unto every one of you according to your Works*, Rev. ii. 21, 22, 23. And though for *wise* and *gracious* Ends, he oftentimes *spares* bad Men in *this* Life, and sometimes shines upon them a continued Day of Prosperity, without any Cloud or Interruption; yet he always *overtakes* them with the fearful Storms of his Vengeance in the Life to *come*. For no sooner do their Souls depart from their Bodies, but they are immediately consigned by *his Warrant* into the Hands of evil Angels; those skilful, spiteful, and powerful *Executioners* of his Justice, under whose savage Tyranny, they endure all the Tortures and Agonies, that Wrath and Power of *Devils*, together with their own awakened *Consciences*, and furious and unsatisfied *Affections* are able to inflict. Of which see *Part* I. *chap.* 3. For that the Souls of bad Men are transmitted into a State of Wretchedness and Misery, *immediately* upon their Separation from their Bodies, is evident from the Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus*; wherein in the first Place, *Dives* immediately after his Death, is said to be *in great Torment in Hell*, and this while his Body lay buried in the Grave, *Luke* xvi. 22, 23. which is a plain Argument, that in all that *Interval* between Death and the Resurrection of the Body, the Souls of bad Men abide in a State of *Torment*; for secondly, this Torment of *Dives*'s Soul in Hell, was *then* when his Brethren were *living* upon Earth, and under the teaching of *Moses* and the Prophets, *ver.* 27, and 28, 29, 30, 31. which shews, that our Saviour supposes it to be at *that* very *Time* when he delivered this Parable; and consequently he supposes all bad Men, who were *then dead*, and whose Condition he represents by that of *Dives* to be *then in Hell*, and there suffering unspeakable *Agonies* and *Torments*; and if so, then it's plain, that whenever *impenitent* Souls leave their Bodies, they are carried by Devils into some dismal Abode, and there kept under a perpetual Discipline of Torments; and in this *deplorable* State they remain expecting that *fearful Day* of Accounts, when their Condition through their *re-union* to their Bodies, and that dread of *bodily Torment*, they must then be condemned to, will be rendred yet far more intolerable.

III. Another

III. Another of those *Regal Acts* which our Saviour *hath* always, and always will *continue to* perform, is, his *protecting* and *defending* his Kingdom in this World. For thus he promises his faithful Church of *Philadelphia*, *Because thou hast kept the Word of my Patience, I also will keep thee from the Hour of Temptation which shall come upon all the World, to try them that dwell upon the Earth*, Rev. iii. 10. By which it is plain, that the Power of *protecting and defending* his Subjects is inherent in Christ, as an *essential* Part of his *Regal Authority*; and this Power he continually exercises now he is in Heaven: For it was for this End, among others, that he promises to be with his Church to the End of the World, *Matt.* xxviii. 20. namely, to *guard* and *defend* it by his Providence against the outragious Attempts of its numerous Enemies. For it is for this End that the Father *hath put all Things in subjection under him, and that he hath left nothing that is not put under him*, Heb. ii. 7, 8. that so having the universal Government of all Things in his Hand, he might, by his over-ruling Providence, render them all subservient to the Interest of his Church: For so *Eph.* i. 21. we are assured, that the Father *hath put all Things under his Feet, and given him to be Head over all Things to his Church*; *i. e.* hath vested him with an universal Power over all Things, that so he might order and direct them all to the Interest and Advantage of his Church. And accordingly now he is in Heaven, the *Defence* and *Preservation* of his *Church* is the great Business which he intends upon Earth: There he now sits looking down from his Throne with a watchful Eye, to *observe* all the Motions, and trace out all the dark Designs of her *Enemies*; and from thence he stretches forth his Almighty Hand to guard and defend her against them, to repel or over-rule their Malice, to drive back their venomous Darts upon themselves, or to temper their Poyson into Physick, and extract a healing Balm out of the Stings of those Scorpions. In which how *careful* and *diligent* he hath been is abundantly manifest from the glorious *Success*; for considering the vast Opposition that hath been made against it, even from its Infancy, how is it possible it could ever have subsisted, had it not been guarded by an invisible Hand? No sooner did this *Light upon a Hill* appear in the World, but all the four Winds immediately conspired to blow it out; yet, (which is miraculous to consider,) still the harder they blew the brighter it flamed; and though for the first three hundred Years it was the main and almost constant Exercise of the Power and Policy, the Wit and Cruelty both of *Devils* and *Men* to suppress and ruin it, yet still it *thrived* and *encreased* under the most powerful Means of its *Extirpation.* It *conquered* by *suffering*, gathered *Strength* by *bleeding*, and, like a head-strong Flood, still the more it was *checked* the more it *swelled* and overflowed, till at length it *filled the Earth as the Waters cover the Sea:* Which if well considered, is an amazing Instance of the *vigilant* and *powerful Providence* of our Saviour, which hath not only *preserved* this burning Bush from consuming, but made it *spring* and *flourish* in the Flames. And though since those *primitive* Persecutions he hath many Times, for wise and gracious Ends, let *loose* the Wolves upon his Flock, and permitted them to worry, and sometimes almost to devour it, yet still he hath kept a strict and steddy *Rein* upon their Power and Malice, and when they have served his Ends, hath check'd and stopp'd them in their savage Career; and when they have thought the trembling Prey their own, hath stretched out his own Almighty Arm, and snatched it from their devouring Jaws. So that while they are clubbing all their Power and Policy against it, *He that sits in the Heavens laughs them to scorn, the Lord hath them in derision*, and doth contemn their impotent Malice, which *he* can manage as *he* pleases; he can either *prevent* the mischievous Effects of it, or cause them to *recoil* upon themselves, or make those very *Persecutions*, with which they design to *destroy* his Church, the Means of its *Inlargement* and *Propagation*; and what in his own *infallible* Wisdom he thinks best, that he hath always done, and will always do for his Church and People: For *many a Time have they afflicted me from my Youth may Israel*, or the Church of Christ, *now say*; *many a Time have they afflicted me from my Youth, yet have they not prevailed against me*; *the*

Plowers have plowed upon my Back, they have made long Furrows, but the Lord is righteous, he hath cut asunder the Cords of the Wicked; and in his own due Time will confound and turn back those that hate Sion.

And as he exerciseth a most *vigilant Providence* over his Church in *general*, so doth he also over *all* the faithful and obedient *Subjects* of it, whose Interest is as dear and precious to him as his *own Blood*; for they are not only the *Purchase* of his *Blood*, but also the *Trophies* and *Conquests* of his *Spirit*, which makes them his by a *double* Propriety, and more *peculiarly* intitles them to his Care and Protection; they are living *Members* of his *own Body*, and as such he feels their Pains by a most tender *Sympathy*; and therefore his Providence is as much concerned for their *Defence*, as his Eye-lid is to defend the Apple of his own Eye, *Zech.* ii. 8. and therefore though he exercises a merciful *Providence* over *all* Men, yet these he *incloses* out of the *Common* of the World, and *fences* about with a *peculiar* Care. These are his *Jewels*, and he keeps them in his Treasury under the *strongest* and most *inviolable* Security. He is always watching over them for good, and it is his *peculiar* and *continual* Concern to protect and defend them, to keep off Temptations from their *Souls*, and Calamities from their Bodies, and so to over-rule and direct the Course of Things, as that whatever befals them may concentre in their *Happiness*. For though he many Times *corrects* them with his *own* Hand, and *permits* them to be oppressed and afflicted by *others*, yet still he doth it with a most *gracious* Intention, either to *cure* or *prevent* some Disease in their Minds, or to *excite* and *exercise* their Graces, or to *wean* them from the Love of this vain World, and *discipline* them for a blessed Eternity; and whatsoever Evils happen to them in the Course of his Providence, still he takes Care to extract *good* out of them, and so to contrive and order the whole Scene of Affairs, as that in the Issue *all Things may still work together for good to them that love God, and are called according to his Purpose*, Rom. viii. 28.

IV. And *lastly*, Another of those *Regal Acts* which our Saviour *hath* always, and *doth* always *continue* to perform, is his *blessing* and *rewarding* all his faithful Subjects in the Life to come; for this, as he himself declares, he hath Power to do; so *Rev.* ii. 7. *To him that overcomes, will I give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God*; *i. e.* I will admit him into a participation of the blessed Immortality of Heaven; so also *Rev.* iii. 21. *To him that overcomes, I will grant to sit with me on my Throne, even as I have overcome, and am sat down with my Father on his Throne:* And he promises the Bishop of the Church of *Smyrna* in particular, *Be thou faithful to the Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life*; *Rev.* ii. 10. In all which Places he expressly declares his *Royal* Authority to *reward* his faithful Subjects, when they leave this World, with the *Joys* and *Felicities* of the World to come: And this Authority he is *continually* exercising in his heavenly Kingdom; for whenever any *faithful* and *obedient Souls* depart from their Bodies, he presently sends forth his *Angelick Messengers* to *conduct* them safe to the immortal Regions, and there to lodge them in some one of those *blissful Mansions* in his Father's House, which he went before to prepare for them; where, free from all the Disturbances of *Flesh* and *Blood*, and of a vexatious and tumultuous World, they live in continued *Ease*, *Content* and *Joy*, wrapt up with the ever-growing *Delights* of *contemplating*, *loving* and *imitating* God, and of the most wise and amicable *Society* and *Communication* with each other, in the Enjoyment of an endless *Bliss* and *Pleasure*; for so we are assured from Scripture, that the Happiness of the Righteous doth commence from the *Moment* of their Departure hence. So *Rev.* xiv. 13. *Blessed are the Dead that die in the Lord from henceforth*; *yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them*; and with St. *Paul* it was the same Thing to *depart from hence and to be with Christ*, Phil. i. 23. which necessarily implies, that upon his Departure he expected to be *immediately* with Christ; and elsewhere he teaches, that *to be at home in the Body was to be absent from the Lord, and to be absent from the Body to be present with the Lord*, 2 Cor. 5, 6, 8.

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neither of which can be true, if the Souls of good Men go not to Heaven immediately when they go from hence; but that they do so, is as plain as Words can express it, in that Promise of our Saviour to the penitent Thief, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, this Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*, Luke xxiii. 43. From whence it evidently follows, that even in the very *Article* of a true Penitent's Death, Heaven's Joys do *attend* his departing Soul to receive it *immediately* when it is dislodged from the Body. Thus in the very *moment* of its Departure hence, the pious Soul is transported to those *blessed Abodes* beyond the Stars, which are the proper Seat and pure Element of *Happiness*, where the blessed Inhabitants live in a *continued Fruition* of their utmost Wishes, being every Moment entertain'd with *fresh* and *enravishing* Scenes of Pleasure, where all their Happiness is *eternal*, and all their Eternity nothing else but only one *continued* Act of *Love*, and *Praise*, and *Joy*, and *Triumph*; where there are no *Sighs*, or *Tears*, no Intermixtures of *Sorrow* or *Misery*, but *every Heart* is full of *Joy*, and *every Joy is Quintessence*, and *every* happy *Moment* is crowned with some *fresh* and *new Enjoyment*. But of this blessed State I have given an Account at large, *Part* I. *Chap.* 1. and 3. And this is that blessed *Reward* with which our Saviour crowns his faithful Subjects *immediately* upon their Departure hence; so that he doth not permit them to lie *sleeping* in the Dust *unrewarded*, till the End of the World, but as soon as they have *finished* their Work upon Earth, admits them to the *Joy of their Master*, to all the Felicities that their *separated* Spirits are capable of in those several *Degrees* and *Measures* of Perfection which they there arrive to; in which happy State they remain during their *Separation* from the Body, expecting the farther *Completion* of their Happiness in a glorious *Resurrection*, by which their Bodies and Souls being re-united, their whole *humane Nature* shall be *filled* with Bliss, to the utmost Stretch of its *Capacity*.

And now having shewn what those *Regal Acts* are, which Christ *hath* always performed, and *doth* always *continue* to perform, I proceed in the

III. And last Place, to shew what those *Regal Acts* are, which are *yet to be* performed by him, before he surrenders up his Kingdom, and these are reducible to three Heads:

First, He is *yet* farther to *extend* and *enlarge* his Kingdom by the Conquest of its Enemies.

Secondly, He is *yet* to destroy *Death*, the last Enemy, by giving a general Resurrection.

Thirdly, He is *yet to judge* the World.

I. He is yet farther to *extend* and *enlarge* his Kingdom by a more universal Conquest of its Enemies. For if we consult the ancient Prophecies, concerning the vast Extent of our Saviour's Kingdom, we shall find that there are a great many of them, which as yet were never *accomplished*: So *Psal.* ii. 8, 9. *Ask of me and I will give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for thy Possession; thou shalt break them with a Rod of Iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a Potter's Vessel*; whereas hitherto it is certain Christ was never possessed of *the uttermost Parts of the Earth*, nor did he ever yet break his incorrigible Opposers *with a Rod of Iron, or dash them in pieces like a Potter's Vessel*; so also *Dan.* vii. 4. it is foretold of Christ, that *there should be given him Dominion and Glory, and a Kingdom, that all People, Nations and Languages should serve him*, and that *all Dominions should serve and obey him*, ibid. *ver.* 27. so also *Dan.* ii. 34, 35, 44, 45. that *the Stone cut out without Hands*, by which all agree is meant the Kingdom of Christ, *should become a great Mountain, and fill the whole Earth, and that it should break in pieces and consume all those other Kingdoms.* Thus also it is foretold, that *the Lord should be King over all the Earth*, Mich. v. 4. and that *there should be but one Lord, and his Name one*, Zech. xiv. 9. and that *he should have Dominion from Sea to Sea, and from the River to the Ends of the Earth*, Psal. lxxii. 8. and that *all Kings should fall down before him, and all Nations serve him*, ibid. *ver.* 11. and that *all the Ends of the Earth should remember and turn to the Lord, and all Kindreds of the Nations worship before him, because*

cause the Kingdom ſhall be the Lord's, and he ſhall govern among the Nations. Theſe, and ſundry other ſuch like Prophecies there are, which, as *yet* is certain, were never *accompliſhed* according to the full Import and Intent of them. Wherefore we may certainly conclude, that there is a Time, *yet to come*, before the Conſummation of all Things, wherein our Saviour will yet *once more* diſplay the victorious Banner of his Croſs, and, like a mighty Man of War, march on *conquering and to conquer*, till he hath confounded or converted his Enemies, and finally *conſummated* his Victories in a *glorious Triumph* over all the Powers of the Earth. For the Scripture not only *foretels* this *Univerſal Conqueſt* of his, but alſo *deſcribes* and *delineates* the whole *Method* and *Progreſs* of it, which upon laying the Scripture Prophecies together, in their proper *Train* and *Series*, ſeems to me to be this, That the opening of this great Scene of Providence, will be the *Converſion* of the *Jewiſh Nation*, thoſe obſtinate and hitherto implacable Enemies of our Saviour, whom notwithſtanding they have been a thouſand times over conquered, ſlaughtered and oppreſſed, and do to this Day continue ſcattered over the Face of the whole Earth, he hath *preſerved* by a *ſtrange* and *unparallel'd* Providence, for above Sixteen hundred Years together, a diſtinct and ſeparate People from all the Nations of the Earth, to ſhew his mighty Power in them, and once more render them, what they have always been, the Subjects of his *miraculous Conduct*. For by a wonderful Effuſion of his Holy Spirit upon them, ſuch as that was on the Day of *Pentecoſt*, though far more extenſive, * he will all of a *ſudden*, and in a moſt *ſurpriſing* manner, † *open* the *Eyes* of this *blinded* Nation, and powerfully convince them of the Error and Wickedneſs of *their* Infidelity and Malice againſt him, whereupon with one Heart and one Mind they ſhall return to the Lord, and with penitent Tears waſh off the Guilt of the *Blood* of their Saviour, * which like an *Hierloom*, hath hitherto deſcended upon them, from one Generation to another; for thus, *Rom.* xi. 25, 26. *I would not, Brethren, that ye ſhould be ignorant of this Myſtery, that Blindneſs in part is hapned to* Iſrael, ἄχρις ἕ, *till when the Fulneſs of the* Gentiles *be come in, and ſo all* Iſrael *ſhall be ſaved, as it is written, there ſhall come out of* Zion *the Deliverer*, &c. from whence it is plain, that that *Blindneſs* which then hapned to *Iſrael*, and which continues on them to this Day, ſhall one Day be *remov'd*, *viz.* about that Time when the Converſion of the *Gentiles* ſhall be *compleated*, and that then all *Iſrael* (and not a ſmall Remnant of them as at firſt) ſhall be ſaved; ſo alſo, 2 *Cor.* iii. 14, 16. *But their Minds are blinded*, (meaning the People of *Iſrael*) *for until this Day remaineth the ſame Veil untaken away, in the reading of the Old Teſtament; nevertheleſs when it ſhall turn to the Lord, the Veil ſhall be taken away*; where he firſt ſuppoſes, that *Iſrael*, that till *then* was blinded, and that till *now* remains ſo, ſhould turn unto the Lord, and then aſſerts, that then the Veil of *Ignorance*, which hindered 'em from *diſcerning* Chriſt in the Figures and Prophecies of the Old Teſtament ſhould be removed from before their Eyes.

*Ezek. xxxix. 28, 29. Iſa. xxxii. 13, 14, 15. Iſa. lix. 20, 21. *compared with* Rom. xi. 26, 27.

† Iſa. lxvi. 8. Zach. 3, 9.

* Zach. xii. 10.

And now the *Jews* being thus *converted* by the Power of our Saviour ſhall under his victorious Banners be conducted into the holy Land, and repoſſeſſed of their ancient *native* Countrey *, whither they ſhall be cloſe purſued with mighty Hoſts of the *Eaſtern* Infidels, and be reduced by them into imminent *Danger* of utter Deſolation; in which Extremity of theirs, our bleſſed Saviour ſhall make bare his *Almighty Arm*, and in a moſt miraculous Manner confound and ſcatter thoſe mighty Swarms of Infidels, and crown his *Iſrael* with Victory and Triumph †. The Fame of which *miraculous Events*, ſpreading far and wide, even to the utmoſt Ends of the Earth, ſhall in a little Time convince all the *heathen World* of the Truth of *Chriſtianity*, and prevail with the Kingdoms of the Earth, to become the Kingdoms

* Jer. xxxii. 37, *to* 41. Ezek. xxxvi. 24, 25. chap. xxxvii. 21, 22, 25. Amos ix. 14, 15. Iſaiah xi. 11, 12.

† Joel iii. 1, 2, 9, 14. Mich. iv. 11, 12. Iſa. xxiv. 21, 22. Zeph. iii. 8. Iſa. lxiii. 1, 6. Iſa. xxxiv. 1. Iſa. lix. 16, 17. Zach. xiv. 13. Hag. ii. 22. Zach. xii. 2, 3, 4.

doms of our *Lord*, and of his *Christ* *. And now the Kingdom of Christ in this World being arrived to its *full Extent* and *Growth*, Truth and Peace, Charity and Justice shall reign and flourish over all the Earth. Now all the *World* shall be *Christendom*, and *Christendom* shall be restored to its ancient *Purity*. For now he who is to come with the *Fan in his Hand*, will throughly *purge* the Floor of his Church, from all that *Chaff* of Superstition and Idolatry, Schism and Heresy, Irreligion and Immorality, with which it is almost totally covered; and the true Faith, the *sincere* Piety, the *generous* and *unaffected* Virtue, which Christianity teaches and prescribes, shall be the universal Livery and Cognisance of the Christian World *. For much about the Time of this *Conversion* of the *Jews*, and that glorious *Call* of the *Gentiles* thence ensuing, that *corrupt* and *degenerate* Faction of Christians, whom the Scripture calls the *mystical Babylon*, and the *Antichrist*, and which for several Ages hath been the great *Nusance* of *Christendom*, will in these Western Parts of the World, muster up all its Forces to destroy and extirpate the *purer* Professors of *Christianity*, by a *general Persecution* †; in which Attempt, for some time, this Faction will be very prevalent and successful ‡, when all of a sudden the *Kings* and *Princes* of the Earth, who have thitherto been *Partakers* with it in its foul *Impostures* and *Corruptions* (being either *awaken'd* by those miraculous *Conversions* of the *Jews* and Eastern Gentiles, or *convinced* of their Errors, by the powerful Impressions of his *Spirit*, in whose Hands the Hearts of Kings are) will *turn* their Swords upon this *Antichristian Faction*, whose Cause they have hitherto espoused, and conspire to *root* out from off the Face of the Earth *; which being effected, the Western Church will universally *reform* itself according to the *Standard* of the Church of *Jerusalem*, which will then be, in a literal Sense, *the Mother of us all* †. Thus partly by *destroying*, and partly by *converting* its Enemies, our Saviour will yet *mightily enlarge* the Borders of his Kingdom, and advance it to the *utmost* Pitch of *Purity* and *Splendour* that this State of Mortality will admit; and in this happy State he will preserve and continue it for several *Ages*, ‡ till a little before the Commencement of the *General Judgment*, at which Time the *Devil*, who had been hitherto chained up, will be *loosed* again, to work in the Children of Disobedience, to excite them to delude and deceive the World again, and to persecute the *sincere* Professors of *Christianity* with incessant Cruelties*, when all of a *sudden*, and while they are *securely* triumphing in the Success of their Villanies, they shall be surprized with the Day of Judgment †, which *like a Thief in the Night* shall come upon them, and put an End to all their Mischiefs for ever.

* Isa. lxvi. 16, 18, 19, 20. Isa. lx. 1, 6. Jer. xiv. 33. Isaiah lxi. 7. Ezek. xxxviii. 16, 21, 22, 23. Rom. xi. 12.

* Psal lxxii 7. Isaiah lxvi 12, and Chap. 23. 4. Mic. iv. 3 Jer. xxxi. 39 Zeph. iii. 8, 9. Ezek xix. 21, 22. Isa ix 7. and Chap. ii 20. Hab ii 14.

† Revel. xiii. 7.

‡ Dan. vii. 21, 22.

* Rev. xvii. 16, 17.

† Isaiah lx. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

‡ Rev. xx. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 16.

* Rev. xx. 7, 8, 9.

† Rev. xx. 10, 11, 12, 14, 15.

II. Another of those *Regal Acts* which he is yet to perform, is to *destroy Death*, the last Enemy, by causing a General *Resurrection* of the Dead, which being one of the great *Articles* of our *Creed*, I shall insist more largely upon it, and endeavour,

First, To prove the *Certainty* of the Fact.

Secondly, To explain the *Manner* how it will be performed.

I. I shall endeavour to prove the *Certainty* of the Fact, *viz.* that our Saviour *shall* raise the Dead; which is as plainly and frequently asserted in holy Scripture, as any Proposition contained in it; for so 2 *Cor.* iv. 14. we are assured, that *God will raise us up by Jesus Christ*, *i. e.* by his Personal Power and Agency; and accordingly, *John* vi. 39, 40, 44, 54. Christ promises us over and over again, that *he will raise us up at the last Day*; and xi. 25. he thus declares himself to *Martha*, *I am the Resurrection and the Life, he that be-*

lieveth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and *John* v. 28. he tells us, that *the Hour is coming, in which all that are in the Grave should hear his Voice*, And of the Truth of this he hath given a most *sure and certain Pledge* by his *own* Resurrection, which not only demonstrates the *Possibility* of the Thing, that the Dead *may* rise, but also gives ample *assurance* that they *shall*. For that he hath in him a Power to raise the Dead, is evident by his raising *himself*; and to be sure that *Power* and *Spirit* that was in him when he raised *himself*, is able to raise all those in whom it resides. Whoever therefore hath the *Spirit* of Christ, *that Spirit* by which he rose from the Dead, hath the *Power* of the *Resurrection* in him; which *Power* to be sure will not be always in vain, but one time or other will most certainly be reduced into *Act*: For so the Apostle assures us, *Rom.* viii. 11. *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal Bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in us.* And indeed considering that Christ in *dying* and *rising* from the Dead, acted as our *Head* and *Representative*, we may justly conclude, that as when he *laid down his Life*, he laid it down for ours; so when he *took it up* again, he took up *ours* with it; and consequently that he *virtually* raised *us* by the *same* Spirit, whereby he *actually* raised *himself*; because he hath not only *Power*, but also *Will*, as he is our *Head* and *Representative*, to raise *us* even as he raised *himself*. So that we are *already* risen in our Causes, since our *Head* and *Representative* is risen, and hath the *same Power* to raise *us*, as he had to raise *himself*; and hence he is called, *the First-born from the Dead*, and *we the Sons of the Resurrection*, Col i. 18. because our Resurrection is now in the *same* Causes, that is, in the same *Will* and *Power*, as his was before he arose. And, therefore, as also he is called the *first Fruits of them that rise*, that is, the *Pledge* and *Handsel* of the General Resurrection; because he is risen with the *same Will* and *Power* to raise *us*, that he had when he arose to raise *himself*; and hence we find the Apostle argues from the Resurrection of *Christ* to the *General* Resurrection, 1 *Cor*. xv. 12. *Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the Dead, how say some among you, that there is no Resurrection of the Dead?* If we are all agreed, that *Christ* is risen, what reason can any Man have to doubt of the *General Resurrection*? But *if there be no Resurrection from the Dead, then Christ is not risen*, ver. 13. To say that *we* shall not rise, is by Consequence to deny the Resurrection of *Christ*; because that very *same Will* and *Power* which must have been the Cause of *Christ's* Resurrection, if *he* be risen, must be the Cause of *ours*, if ever *we* rise; and therefore if it be insufficient to raise *us*, it could never have been sufficient to raise *him*, and consequently *he* cannot be risen. If it be objected against this reasoning of the Apostle, that *our Resurrection* will be far more *difficult* to accomplish than *Christ*'s was, because his Body was never *corrupted*, nor were the Parts of it ever *dispersed*, as ours will be, long before the Resurrection; and therefore, that Cause which was sufficient to raise *Christ*, may not be sufficient to raise *us*: It may easily be answered, that to the *infinite Power* by which Christ was raised, all possible Things are *equally easy*; and therefore allowing our Resurrection to be but possible, it must be every whit as *easy* to that *infinite Power* by which Christ was raised, to *reduce* all our scattered Atoms into one Mass again, and to *re-organize* them into a Humane Body, and *re-unite* it to its ancient Soul, as it was to quicken the yet *uncorrupted* Body of our Saviour. So that all the Question is, whether the thing be *possible*; for if it be, it will be every a whit as *easy* to the *omnipotent* Cause of our Saviour's Resurrection, to raise our Bodies as it was to raise *his*. But, I beseech you, why should it be thought more *impossible* for God to *raise* a dead corrupted Body, whose Parts are all *dispersed* and *scattered* throughout the vast Wilderness of Matter, and *re-unite* it to its primive Soul, than it was at first to *create* the Matter of it, and then *form* it into a humane Body, and *animate* it with a humane Soul? He who at the *first Creation* could *separate* the *confused Mass* of Matter into so many distinct *Kinds* and *Species* of Beings,

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can, doubtlefs, at the general Refurrection, as eafily *feparate* the *fame* Matter into its diftinct and feveral *Individuals.* For, what fhould hinder him who numbers the *Stars* of the Heavens, the *Sands* of the Sea, and the *Hairs* of our Heads, from keeping an exact Account of all our *fcattered Particles*, and from knowing what *Duft* belongs to every *Body*, and what *Body* to every *Soul?* Or how can it be *difficult* to him whofe *Power* is as *immenfe* as his *Knowledge*, to *recollect* all the Parts of this curious Piece of Clock-work which he both made and took in funder, and to *reftore* every *Pin* into its proper Place, every *Spring* to its due Vigour and Activity, and every *Wheel* to its primitive Figure and Motion? If it be farther objected, that there is an *impoffibility* in the *Nature* of the Thing, for the *fame* dead Body after it is *corrupted*, and its Parts all *difpers'd*, to be *re-united* and raifed to *Life* again; I anfwer, that fince thefe difperfed *Parts* of our Bodies do not *perifh*, but are fafely *laid up* in the Chambers of Nature, however they are *fcattered*, or where-ever *lodged*, they are all within the Ken of God's *Knowledge*, and within the Reach of his *Power*; and fo long as they are fo, why fhould their *Separation* render it *impoffible* for them to be *re-united* how and when he pleafes: If you fay, that in that *perpetual* Courfe of *Tranfmutation* which the Matter of humane Bodies runs, it may happen, and fometimes doubtlefs it *doth*, that the *fame Particles* at feveral Times are incorporated into *feveral* Bodies: As for Inftance, when *one* Man eats either the Flefh, or that which hath the Flefh or Subftance of *another* in it, and digefts it into a Part of his own Body or Subftance; in which Cafe, how is it poffible at the Refurrection, that the Subftance or Matter of *this Part* fhould be re-united to them *both?* To this I anfwer, that confidering that fcarce the *hundredth* Part of what we eat is *digefted* into the Subftance of our Bodies, and that all the reft we *render back* again into the *common Mafs* of Matter by fenfible or infenfible Evacuations; though we fhould fuppofe one Man to have eaten up the whole Subftance of another's Body, yet he retains but *one* Part of an *hundred*; and what fhould hinder an *omnipotent Power* from raifing the Body he hath devoured out of the ninety-nine Parts which he lets go again? And then confidering that in feven Years Time the whole Subftance of our Body *changes*, he muft, if he live fo long, evacuate that *one* Part which he retained, and fo the *whole* will at laft be *worn off* from the Matter and Subftance of his Body. Nay, fuppofe this Devourer to feed altogether upon *Man*'s Flefh, as fome affirm the *Cannibals* do, and that in the laft feven Years before his Death, he devours *one hundred* humane Bodies weighing *two hundred Pound* a-piece; according to this Computation, the utmoft he can be fuppofed to digeft of the Flefh of thefe *hundred* Bodies into the Subftance of his own, amounts not to above *two Pound* of each, fo that of the *two hundred* Weight of bodily Subftance, whereof thefe devoured Bodies did confift, there will ftill remain *one hundred ninety-eight*, undigefted into the Subftance of the Devourer; which we may eafily conceive is *fufficient* Matter out of which to reproduce the fame Bodies: For we many Times lofe as much of our Subftance in a *Sweat*, and a great deal more in a *Confumption*, as thefe devoured Bodies do in their being eaten and digefted; notwithftanding which our Bodies continue *numerically* the fame: But as for the Bodies of thefe *Man-eaters*, there is no doubt but they carry with them a great deal of *other* Subftance to their Graves, befides that of Man's Flefh; for the *Liquor* which they drink with it, the *Bread* which they eat with it, and the other *accidental Nourifhments* which they receive with it, goes into the Subftance of their Bodies as well as *that*; and thefe being at leaft one half of their *Nourifhment*, muft conftitute at leaft one half of their *Bodies*. What then fhould hinder, but that at the Refurrection the other half of them, which confifts of Man's Flefh, may be feparated from them, and reftored to thofe humane Bodies they devoured; and if fo, then each of them fhall recover its *whole* Subftance again, and not want fo much as one *Particle* of all that Matter whereof they were compofed when they were eaten: For it is but juft, that they fhould be

made to refund those unnatural Spoils, which they barbarously ravished from the Bodies of other Men. But then you will say, How shall the Body of the *Cannibal* that eat them be raised, when according to this Account it must be deprived of one half of the Substance it died withal? I answer, that to this remaining half of his bodily Substance, there may, without any Repugnance to its being raised the *same Body*, be added out of the *common Mass* of Matter, as much new bodily Substance as is sufficient to redintegrate it in all its Parts; for the Resurrection of the *same Body*, doth not necessarily imply that all the *same Matter* shall be raised, and no *other*, and no *more*. For if all shall be raised in the most *perfect* Stature and Proportion of humane Bodies, as there is no doubt but they shall, then Infants and Dwarfs, and such as die of Consumptions must have *new Matter* added to that which they die withal; and therefore the Resurrection of the *same Body* can imply no more than this, that every Body shall be raised out of the *same Matter*, so far as it will go; and therefore if this remaining half of the Substance of the *Cannibal*'s Body, will not go far enough to redintegrate his *whole* Body at the Resurrection, there is no doubt but God will add *new Substance* to it, which will no more hinder it from being the *same numerical* Body, than the Reparation of an House *with new Stones* and *Timber* hinders it from being the *same numerical* House. For suppose that God by a Miracle should in an Instant restore a Man to his *full Bulk*, the Substance of whose Body is half pined away by a lingring *Consumption*, this would not at all hinder, but that still it would be the *same numerical* Body. Why then should the Addition of *new* bodily Substance to the remaining half of the Matter of the *Cannibal*'s Body at the Resurrection, hinder it from being raised *numerically* the *same*?

And this I conceive is sufficient to clear the Doctrine of the general Resurrection from all Pretence of *Repugnancy* and *Contradiction*. But suppose after all, that there should be some *rare* and *singular* Instances, wherein it will be *impossible* in the Nature of the Thing for the *same numerical* Body to be raised again; this would no more impeach the Truth of a general Resurrection of the same Bodies; than *Enoch*'s and *Elijah*'s not dying, do the Truth of the Maxim of the Author to the *Hebrews*, *It is appointed for all Men once to die.* If therefore in any Instance it should be *impossible* in the Nature of the Thing for God to raise the *same* Body, it will be sufficient to serve the Purpose of *Rewards* and *Punishments*, for God to cloath the *same Soul* in a *new Body*. For it is the *Soul* that individuates the Man, and makes him to be the *same Person* though he hath not the *same Body*. We have not the same *Matter* about us when we are ten Years old, that we were first cloathed with when we were born; and as he who shall be rewarded or punished *ten Years* hence, for a Virtue or a Crime, which he acts *now*, will be rewarded or punished in the *same Body*, though *not* in the *same Matter*; so he who shall be rewarded or punished at the Resurrection for the Good or Evil which he doth in this Life, will be rewarded or punished in the *same Person*, though it should not be in the *same Body*. But it being more congruous to the *Accuracy* and *Exactness* of the divine Justice, that it should be in the *same Body*, as well as in the *same Person*, and it being every whit as *easy* to an *infinite Power*, to restore to our Souls the *same Bodies* as to cloath them in *new* Ones (for within the Compass of Possibilities, all Things are equally within the reach of Omnipotence) Men's Bodies shall be universally rebuilt at the Resurrection out of those *old Ruins* and *Materials*, in which they did Good or Evil in this Life; and if there should happen some *particular* Instances wherein such a numerical Resurrection should be in itself *impossible*, these will be only a few Exceptions from that general Rule, which rather confirm than destroy it. For thus from Scripture we are assured, that they who sleep in the Dust of the Earth shall awake, *Dan.* xii. 2. and that *all that are in the Grave shall hear Christ's Voice and come forth*, John v. 28, 29. that *the Sea shall give up the Dead which are in it*, and that *Death and Hell*, i. e. the Grave, *shall deliver up the Dead which are in them*, Rev. xx. 13. All which Expressions,

Expressions, according to the literal Sense of them (from which, without necessary Reasons, we ought not to depart) do plainly import a Resurrection of the *same numerical Bodies.* Our Resurrection therefore being a *possible* Thing, is as *easy* to an *omnipotent* Power, as *Christ's* was, and therefore *his* Resurrection is a most certain Pledge of *ours*; since he arose as our common *Head* and *Representative*, and consequently rose with the very same *Will* and *Power* to raise *us* which he had to raise *himself.*

Having thus proved the Truth of the *Matter* of Fact, *viz.* that Christ will raise us at the last Day; I proceed in the next Place to the *Manner* of the Fact, how it is that he will raise us. In treating of which, I shall regulate myself by that Account which the Apostle gives of it, 1 *Cor.* i. 5. in which he having proved at large the Truth of the Resurrection, from *verse* 12. to the 35*th*, he comes to answer an Objection concerning the Manner of it; *but some Men will say, how are the Dead raised up, and with what Body do they come?* In answer to which, he gives a large Description of it, and by the Similitude of *Seed*, explicates the *Manner* how it shall be performed, till he comes to *ver.* 42. where he applies the Similitude to the Matter in Hand; *so also is the Resurrection of the Dead*; and then goes on with a farther Enlargement on it to the End of the Chapter. So that this *so also* refers both to what went before, and to what follows. So *also*, i. e. so as I have already in Part *described*, and shall farther explain in my ensuing Discourse; this *so* therefore referring to the *whole Description*, implies these five Particulars, of which the whole consists.

First, *So* is this mortal Body to be the *Seed* and *material Principle* of our Resurrection.

Secondly, *So* must this Seed *die* and be *corrupted*, before it be quickned and revived.

Thirdly, *So* is the dead corrupted Body to be *raised* and *quickned* by the Power of God.

Fourthly, *So* is it to be *raised* by the divine Power, into the proper and natural Form of an humane Body.

Fifthly, *So* is this humane Body to be *changed* and *altered* in its Resurrection.

I. *So is the Resurrection of the Dead*, i. e. so is this mortal Body to be the *Seed* and *material Principle* of the Resurrection. For this is plainly implied, *ver.* 36. *Thou Fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.* Intimating, that as the *Seed* is the *material Cause* of the Ear of Corn which afterwards springs up, *so* are these *mortal Bodies* which we sow in the Earth, at least the main *materials* of those immortal ones into which we shall be quickned at the Resurrection. Perhaps as the Seed *digests* and *incorporates* into itself the *Juices* of the Earth, and shoots them up *together* with its own Substance into the Stalk and Ear; so in some particular Instances at least, there may be other *Matter* at our Resurrection *interwoven* with the appropriate Substance of our mortal Bodies, and *together* with it spring up into *immortal* ones. Yet from the Apostle's Comparison it is apparent, that *this* very mortal Body which we sow in the Grave shall be at least the *Seed* and *Embrio* which shall receive our Soul at the Resurrection, and by that (supposing *other Matter* be added to it) *assimulate* and *digest* it into its own Substance. Now though to *reproduce* the scattered Particles of our dissolved Flesh, and *extricate* them out of all those other Substances whereinto they have been woven and entangled, may seem to us at first View an *impossible Performance*; yet that it is not *so*, I have already demonstrated; and if a Parcel of *Quick-silver*, after it hath run a tedious Course of *Alteration*, shifted itself out of its *natural Form*, into that of *Vapour*, out of a *Vapour* into an insipid *Water*, out of *Water* into a white or red or yellow *Powder*, out of that into a *Salt*, and thence into a malleable *Metal*, may by a skilful Artist be reduced out of all those various Contextures, into its *natural Form* of plain and running *Mercury*; why should we think it either *impossible*

or *difficult* for a Being of *immense Knowledge* and *Power*, to watch the wandering Particles of our corrupted Bodies, through all their successive *Alterations*, and to *retrieve* them out of all those Substances, into which they shall be finally resolved; to take out of one Body, what belongs to another, and restore to each its own; and finally to *incorporate* them altogether into their *natural Forms* and *Figures*?

II. *So* is the Resurrection of the Dead, *i. e. so* is this Seed of our mortal Body, to *die* and be *corrupted*, before it shall be raised again. *That which thou sowest is not quickened unless it die*; intimating, that as the *Parts* of the *Seed* are *separated* in the Ground, and *dissolved* into a liquid Jelly, before it springs up into a *Stalk* and *Ear*; so this mortal *Body* of ours must be *corrupted*, its Parts must be *dispersed* and *dissipated* from one another, before it quickens and springs up again at the general *Resurrection*; and indeed the Body must *naturally corrupt*, when once it is *separated* from the Soul that enlivens it; and that before it is raised and glorified, the *Soul* should remain for some Space *separated* from it, seems highly necessary. For the Nature of *Souls* is such as requires a gradual and leisurely *Progression* out of one State into another, their Faculties are such as cannot in a natural Way be improved but by *degrees*, or qualified in an Instant for two *extream Conditions*, without a Miracle. But as for this mortal State, and that of the *Resurrection*, they are two such remote and distant *Extreams*, as that *our* slow-paced *Natures*, cannot travel from one to the other under a long Space of *Time*; and for a Soul to pass in one Instant out of an *earthly* into an *heavenly*, out of a *fleshly* into a *spiritual*, out of a *mortal* into an *immortal* Body, seems too *great* a Leap for a Being, whose Nature confines it to a *gradual* Improvement. For how should a *Soul* which hath been so long immured in mortal *Flesh*, so long accustomed to its *sensual* Pleasures, so clogged and incumbred with its unweildy *Organs*, so pinioned and hampered by its brutish *Appetites*; how, I say, is it possible in a *natural* Way, for *such* a *Soul* to be immediately disposed to act and animate an *heavenly Body*? And therefore it is requisite that for *some* Time at least it should continue in a *separate* State, there to innure itself to a *heavenly Life*, and by a continued Contemplation, and Love, and Imitation of God to ripen *gradually* into the State of the Resurrection, and to contract a perfect *Aptitude* to animate an *heavenly Body*; that so its Powers being *enlarged* and *improved* by Exercise, it may be able to manage that *active* fiery Chariot, and be prepared to operate by its *nimble* and *vigorous* Organs, which till the Soul is rendered more sprightly and active, by long and continual *Exercise*, will be perhaps too swift for it to keep pace withal. It is true, the Apostle tells us of some Souls, that in an *Instant* shall be fitted for, and with these heavenly Bodies, 1 *Cor.* xv. 51, 52. *Behold I shew you a Mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a Moment, i. e.* those good Men who are living just before the Resurrection, shall suffer no *Separation* of their Souls from their Bodies; but the beggarly Vestment of their *Flesh*, while it is upon them, shall in an *Instant* be *transformed* into a glorious and immortal Robe; which to be sure it would not be, unless in the same Instant also, their *Souls* were made *fit* to wear it. But then it is to be considered that both will be *miraculous*; and, for ought I know, it will be as great a Miracle immediately to fit an *imperfect Soul* for a *glorified Body*, as immediately to change a *gross* and *corruptible* Body into a *glorious* and *immortal* One. And therefore though some Souls shall be *immediately* qualified to operate by glorified Bodies, without any intermediate Space of *Separation*; yet this being *extraordinary* and *miraculous*, is only an *Exception* from the general Rule of *Providence*, which is to leave Things to proceed and act according to the *regular* Course of their *Natures*; and if Souls are so left, as ordinarily to be sure they are, it is highly requisite that they should be allowed some *space* of *Separation* from their *mortal* Bodies, before they are cloathed with their *immortal* Ones; and consequently, that this mortal Body should be *corrupted* and *dissolved* before it is *quickned* and *glorified*.

III. *So is the Resurrection of the Dead*; that is, so is the dead corrupted Body to be raised and quickned by the Power of God; so *ver.* 37, 38. *That which thou sowest thou sowest not that Body that shall be, but bare Grain, perhaps of Wheat, or of some other Grain, but God giveth it a Body as it pleaseth him*; in which he plainly intimates, that as a *Grain* of Wheat sown in the Ground is only the *Seed* or *material Principle* of the *Stalk* and *Ear* that spring up from it; but *God* is the *principal efficient* Cause that forms the Matter, and enlivens it, and causes it to spring up and ripen: So though these *mortal* Bodies which we sow in the Grave are the *Seed* and *Matter* out of which our *immortal* one shall spring, yet it is *God* that must *recollect* this Matter, *reduce* it into a Body again, and *reunite* it to its ancient Soul. For this is such a Performance as doth require an *Almighty* Agent; it is *he alone* can trace our *scattered* Atoms through all those Generations and Corruptions wherein they have wandered, and retrieve them out of all those other Bodies whereinto they have been finally resolved. It is *he alone* can *separate* them into the several Masses whereunto they originally appertained, and *order*, *distinguish* and *distribute* those rude Masses into their various Parts, and connect and joyn one Part to another. It is he alone that can *recognize* those undistinguished Heaps into humane Bodies, and *reunite* them to their primitive Souls. And accordingly we find, that this great Article of the Resurrection is in Scripture resolved into the Power of God: For so our Saviour attributes the Sadducees Denial of the Resurrection, to their *not knowing the Scripture and the Power of God*, Matth. xxii. 29. which plainly implies, that the Power of God must be the Cause of the Resurrection. So 2 *Cor.* i. 9. St. *Paul* tells us, that he was brought into a great Extremity, that so *he might not trust in himself, but in God that raiseth up the Dead*; and 1 *Tim.* vi. 13. *I charge thee*, saith he, *before God that quickneth all Things.* And indeed to *quicken* our Bodies when they are dead, requires the same Power as it did at first to *create* and *form* them. For as at their first *Creation* they were formed out of the *pre-existing* Matter of the Earth, so at the *Resurrection* they must be *reproduced* out of the same Matter again; and as at the *Creation* all those distinct kinds of Beings we behold lay *shuffled* together in one common Mass, 'till the fruitful Voice of *God* separated this united Multitude into their distinct Species; so at the *Resurrection*, after these mortal Bodies are crumbled into Dust, and that Dust is scattered through all that confused Mass again, it is *God alone* whose powerful Voice can command them *back again* in their proper Shapes, and call them out again by their single Individuals; so that as our first Existence was only a real Echo to God's omnipotent *Fiat*, so will our Return into Existence be to his Almighty *Surge*. The Scripture indeed seems to affirm, that the holy *Angels* will be imployed in this great Transaction, though what they are to do in it is not only expresly related; only 1 *Thess.* iv. 16. the Apostle seems to intimate, that their Office will be to collect the scattered Relicks of our Mortality; for there he tells, that *the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Archangel, and the Trump of God*; upon which *the Dead in Christ shall rise first.* Which popular Description seems to import, that as by a loud *Voice* or a *Trumpet* it was anciently the Custom of the *Jews*, and other Nations, to summon *Assemblies*, and particularly by a *Trumpet* to collect and rally their *Armies:* So at the *Resurrection* our Saviour, by the Ministry of his *Angels*, under the Conduct of their *Archangel*, will assemble and rally our scattered Atoms, and then by his Divine Power organize them into humane Bodies again, and reunite them to their proper Souls. For so *Mat.* xxiv. 31. Christ tells us, that his Angels shall with the *sound of the Trumpet gather together his Elect from the four Winds.* Which if you compare with the above-cited Text, you will find, that this sound of the *Trumpet*, by which the Elect are to be gathered, is to *precede* their Resurrection, and consequently, that it is not to gather them when they *are* raised, but to gather them *to be* raised; that is, to collect their dispersed Dust which hath been blown about upon the Wings of the Wind, in order to their being *redintegrated* into humane Bodies, and *reinformed* with their Primitive Souls.

IV. So

IV. *So is the Resurrection of the Dead,* i. e. so are our dead Bodies to be raised again into the proper Form and Kind of humane Bodies; and this is implied in *ver.* 38. *But God giveth it a Body as it pleaseth him, and unto every Seed his own Body, i. e.* as to the Seed of Wheat, which dies in the *Winter*, God gives in the *Spring* the Body, or Stalk, and Ear of Wheat; so to this Mortal Body which we sow in the *Grave*, God will give at the *Resurrection* its own proper and specifick Form. For the Soul will have the same Faculties at the *Resurrection,* that it hath now in this Mortal State, and the *Body* is only in order to the *Soul,* its Parts and Members being all purposely contrived into fit Instruments for the Soul to work withal. These inward *Faculties* therefore continuing still and for ever the *same*, it is highly requisite, that at the Resurrection they should be *refitted* with the same Corporeal Instruments of Action: For the Soul is to the Body, what the *Art* is to the *Thing* that is formed by the Art; and therefore as the *Thing* formed is not perfect, so long as it is any way disproportionable to the Art which formed it; so neither can the *Body* be perfect, till in all its Parts it is every way apportioned unto the Faculties of the *Soul*; and how can the Matter of this corrupted Body be *re-adapted* to the natural Faculties of a humane Soul, unless it be raised again into an humane Body, and restored to its *primitive* Figure and Proportion? For should it be raised with *more* or *fewer* Parts than those it now consists of, it must either be *defective* or *superfluous* in its Parts, or the Soul must have more or fewer Faculties to employ them. It's true, after the *Resurrection,* the Scripture plainly tells us, that our Souls shall no longer exercise those their *Animal Faculties* of nourishing and propagating; that *the Sons of the Resurrection shall neither marry, nor be given in Marriage, but that they shall be equal to the Angels of God,* Matth. xxii. 30. and indeed since every individual Man will then be raised into an *immortal State,* there will be no need either that they should be *nourished* themselves, or that they should *propagate* any more Individuals to preserve their kind. But it doth not hence follow, either that the *Soul* shall be deprived of those *animal Faculties*, or consequently, that the *Body* shall be raised without the *Organs*, by which those *animal Operations* are performed: For though our Saviour's Body, after the *Resurrection,* had no need of *Nourishment*; yet it is plain, that it was raised again with its natural *Instruments* of eating and drinking, which he once actually used, to assure his Disciples of the *Reality* of his Resurrection; and though now those Parts are useless to him, as to that *particular* animal Operation, yet there is no doubt, but his *Soul* still uses them for other *unknown* Purposes, peculiar to his glorified State; or if he do not, yet since those Parts were necessary to the *Perfection* of a humane Body, and consequently, to the *Redintegration* of his humane Nature, it was requisite he should be raised with them, that so he might have *corporeal* Organs adapted to his *animal* Faculties, which it is plain were not *extinguished* by his *Resurrection*; and since the Resurrection of our Saviour's Body is in Scripture represented as the Pattern of *ours* (for he shall change our *vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious Body,* Phil. iii. *ver.* 21.) we may hence warrantably conclude, that *ours* shall be raised as *his* was, *compleat* in all the Parts of an humane Body.

V. And lastly, *So is the Resurrection of the Dead*; *i. e.* so are these humane Bodies to be changed and altered by the Resurrection. So *ver.* 37. *That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that Body that shall be, but bare Grain*; intimating, that as the Seed, when it is sown, is nothing but *bare Seed*, though when is is quickned, it springs up into a long *Stalk* and *Ear*, which many times contains in it an hundred Grains; even so this mortal Body, which is only the *naked Seed* of our Resurrection, shall be very much altered from what it is, and changed into a more *compleat* and *perfect* Substance. For the more clear and distinct Explication of which, we will *first* consider the Change that will then be made in the Bodies of *good* Men; and *secondly*, the Change that will be made in the Bodies of the *Wicked*.

First,

First, We will consider the Change that will then be made in the Bodies of *good* Men; which consists of four Particulars.

First, They will be changed from *base* and *humble* into *glorious* Bodies.

Secondly, From *earthly* and *fleshly* into *spiritual* and *heavenly* Bodies.

Thirdly, From *weak* and *passive* into *active* and *powerful* Bodies.

Fourthly, From *mortal* and *corruptible* into *immortal* and *incorruptible* Bodies.

I. The Bodies of *good* Men will be changed from *base* and *humble* into *bright* and *glorious* ones: so *ver.* 43. *It is sown in Dishonour, it is raised in Glory*; that is, when it is sown in the Grave, it is a *base* and *abject* thing, not to be endured above Ground for its ghastly Looks, and nauseous Stink and Putrefaction; but at its Resurrection it shall come forth in a *bright* and *beautiful* and *venerable* Form; for so our Saviour assures us, that after their Resurrection *the Righteous shall shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*, Matth xiii. 43. that is, the Matter of their Bodies shall be *refined* and *exalted* into a bright and lucid Substance, which shall glitter like the Sun, and cast forth Rays of Glory round about them; and this, perhaps, is *that Inheritance of the Saints in Light*, that is, embodied in Light, which the Apostle speaks of, *Col.* i. 12. for when this dull Matter comes to be *re-animated* with a blessed and glorified Soul, it will doubtless derive from it a great deal of *Beauty* and *Lustre*. For if *now* our Soul, when it is overjoyed, can so transfigure our Bodies, fill our *Eyes* with such sprightly Flames, overspread our *Countenance* with such an amiable Air, and paint our *Faces* with such a serene and florid Aspect, what a Change will it make in our *Resurrection-body*, which being incomparably more fine and subtil than *this*, will be far more pliable to the Motions of the Soul? When therefore the happy Soul shall re-enter this *softned* and *liquid* Matter, ravish'd with unspeakable Joy and Content; how will its delightsome Emotions change and transfigure it, how will its active Joys shine through and overspread it with an amiable Glory; especially when with this *natural* Energy of its glorified Soul, our Saviour himself shall co-operate to *change this vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious Body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all Things to himself*. Though now therefore the Matter of our Bodies is *vile* and *sordid*, and such as seems altogether incapable of such a *glorious Change*; yet according to the best Philosophy, there is no *specifick* difference in Matter, and if the vilest and most ignoble Matter, may by mere *Motion*, not only be crystallized but transformed into a flaming Brightness, as we are sure it may; if in lighting of a *Candle* that is newly blown out, by applying another to the ascending Smoke, this *dark* and *stinking* Substance may in the twinkling of an Eye be changed into a *bright* and *glorious* Flame; into what a *refulgent* Substance may the Matter of this *mortal Body* be changed, by the Concurrence of an *infinite Power*, with the vigorous *Activity* of a glorified Soul?

II. The Bodies of good Men will be changed from *earthly* and *fleshly* into *spiritual* and *heavenly*. So *ver.* 44. *It is sown*, saith he, *a natural Body, it is raised a spiritual Body*, where those Words σῶμα ψυχικὸν, which we render *a natural Body*, may perhaps be better translated an *animal* Body, *i. e.* a Body suited and adapted to this animal Life, which the Beasts that perish enjoy in common with us; a Body that is *sustained* by animal Operations and *recreated* with animal Pleasures, and which by reason of its gross Substance, doth continually *crave* to be supplied with suitable *Nourishment*, and treated with gross and carnal *Pleasures*, which is the very thing that renders it so great a Cumber to the immortal Spirit that animates it. But at the Resurrection it will be improved into a *spiritual Body*, not that it will be converted into a *spiritual Substance*; for the Apostle's own Words do assure us, that it will still remain a *Body*, but the *Spirituality* of it will consist in this, that being wrought into a *purer* and *finer* Substance, it will no longer need or crave these animal *Nourishments* and *Pleasures*, but be perfectly *fitted* for and *contempered* to the *Soul*, and entirely resigned to its *Use* and Service; for it will then be *refined* from

from all thoſe animal *Appetites* of eating, drinking and carnality, which do now too often not only render it *unſerviceable* to the Soul, but alſo *hurtful* and *injurious:* So that then it will be in entire Subjection to the *Mind,* and all its Members will be devoted Inſtruments to the Service of *Righteouſneſs*; ſo that now there will be no longer any Law in its *Members,* to wage War againſt the Law in the *Mind,* but the *Mind* will govern, and the *Body* obey without any Conteſt or Reluctancy; and as the *Body* will be wholly *obedient* to the Mind, ſo it will be perfectly *adapted* to its Service; for whereas now by reaſon of its groſs Conſiſtency, it is an unwieldy *Luggage* to the *Soul,* and doth very much *clog* and *incumber* her in her Operations; it will then be wrought into ſo fine and tenuious a Subſtance, as that inſtead of a *Clog,* it will be a *Wing* to the Soul: for its Conſiſtence will be ſubtil as the fineſt *Æther,* and active as the pureſt *Flame*; it will have nothing that is groſs or burthenſome in it to *retard* or *weary* it in its Flights, to *rebate* its Vigour, or *ſlacken* its Motion, but it will be all *Life* and *Spirit,* and *Wing,* and, like a perpetual Motion, be carried on with *unwearied Swiftneſs* by its own internal Springs, and being freed from all that *Weight* which now renders it ſo ſlow and heavy, it will be able to move, like a *Thought,* and to keep Pace with the moſt nimble *Wiſhes* of the Soul; ſo that what *Hieroles* ſaith of his ſpiritual Body, ὃ τῇ νοερᾷ τελειότητι τῆς ψυχῆς συνάπτηται, *i. e.* that it is ſuch a Body as is every way fitted to the *intellectual Perfections* of the Soul, will be true of this *Reſurrection-Body,* which will be perfectly attempered to a perfect *Mind,* and faſhioned into a moſt convenient *Organ* for it, whereby to exert its *pureſt* and moſt *ſpiritual Operations.*

III. The Bodies of *good* Men will be changed from *weak* and *paſſive*; into *active* and *powerful* Bodies; ſo *ver.* 43. *It is ſown in Weakneſs, it is raiſed in Power*; that is, whereas the Body which we ſow in the Grave is exceeding *weak* and *infirm,* liable to infinite *Paſſions* and *Diſeaſes,* and can *do* but *little,* but *ſuffer much*; it ſhall be raiſed with a Temperament ſo *pure* and *juſt,* ſo *hail* and *vigorous,* that no *Diſeaſe* or *Infirmity* ſhall ever find any Place in it, or be able to cramp it in its Operations: For beſides that, its *elementary* Qualities (if any ſuch remain in it) ſhall be turned into ſuch an *exquiſite* Temper, that they ſhall never jar or diſagree with each other, it ſhall be ſo *ſpirited* and *invigorated* by the bleſſed Soul that animates it, that nothing ſhall be able to impair its *Health,* or diſcompoſe its *Harmony.* So that it ſhall *live* for ever without *Decay,* *move* for ever without *Wearineſs,* *faſt* for ever without *Hunger,* and *wake* for ever without any *Need* or *Deſire* of *Refreſhment.* And, indeed, conſidering for what *purpoſe* our Bodies ſhall be raiſed, they have need to be very *ſtrong* and *vigorous*; for they ſhall be raiſed on purpoſe to be the *Organs* and *Inſtruments* of the Operations of our *glorified Souls,* which being exceeding active as they are *Spirits,* but exceedingly more active as they are *glorified Spirits,* will require Bodies *ſuitably* ſtrong and vigorous, ſuch as can ſupport *their Joys,* expreſs *their Activities,* and keep Pace with *their rapturous Emotions*; to do which, will require a mighty *Firmneſs* and *Vigour* of Temper. Since therefore at the Reſurrection God will fit and adapt our *Bodies* to the utmoſt Activity of our *glorified Spirits,* they muſt neceſſarily be ſuppoſed to be endued with unſpeakable *Strength* and *Agility,* upon which Account they are called by the ancient *Hebrews, Eagles Wings,* upon which they ſuppoſe our *glorified Souls* ſhall be able to fly as faſt, and as far as they pleaſe; and this I am apt to think is intimated in that Paſſage of St. *Paul,* 1 Theſſ. iv. 17. *And they that are alive,* and whoſe Bodies are changed in the State of the Reſurrection, *ſhall be caught up in the Clouds to meet the Lord in the Air*; the Meaning of which is, not that they ſhall be ſnatched up from the Earth by any *external* Cauſe or *Agent,* but that their Bodies being changed into pure ethereal Flame, ſhall of their *own accords* aſcend in them, as in ſo many fiery Chariots, to the Throne of their Redeemer in the Clouds; and from thence, when the *Judgment* is concluded, ſhall as nimbly aſcend with him through all

all those spacious Fields of Air and *Æther*, that lie between that and the eternal Paradise of Blessedness: For that they shall be *caught up* by *Angels*, as some imagine, I see no reason to think; since our Saviour himself assures us, that at the Resurrection they shall be ἰσάγγελοι, and therefore shall not *need* their Help in this *angelified* State, either to waft them up into the Air, or from thence into the Heaven of Heavens; and if by their *own Activity* they shall be able to perform so vast a Flight, as 'tis from the *Earth* into the uppermost Region of the *Air*, and from thence into the *supreme Region* of everlasting Glory, we may from thence collect what a vast Power they will be endued with at their *Resurrection*. But this is most certain, that then they shall be perfectly released from all dolorous *Passion*, and continue in perfect *Strength* and *Health*, and *Vigour* for ever. So that whereas now our Bodies are exceeding *weak* and *passive*, a kind of walking Hospitals of Pains, Infirmities and Diseases; the Time will come, when our *Soul* shall be accommodated with a much more *easy* and *convenient*, as well as *glorious Habitation*, wherein it shall for ever forget those dismal Cries, O my Head, my Heart, my Bowels, and enjoy everlasting *Rest* and *Freedom*. Now she is in a *travelling* Condition, and the *Inn* she lodges at is *mean* and *inconvenient*, her Provision is coarse, her Bed hard, and her Rest continually interrupted with Noise and Tumult; but when she is once got home to her own House, her *House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens*, she shall there live in perfect *Ease and Pleasure*, free from all the Annoyances of Flesh and Blood, from all the Disturbances of Pain and Sickness, and from all the Toil and Fatigue, the Noise and Hurry of this mortal Condition, and with splendid *State*, delicious *Fare*, soft and quiet *Repose*, recompence herself a thousand-fold for all her present *Travail* and *Weariness*.

IV. And *lastly*, The Bodies of *good* Men will be changed from *corruptible* and *mortal* into *incorruptible* and *immortal*. So *ver*. 42, 53. *It is sown in Corruption, it is raised in Incorruption, and this corruptible must put on Incorruption, this Mortal must put on Immortality*, i. e. whereas this Body which we lay down hath, in the very Constitution of it, the Seeds of *Mortality* and *Corruption*, at the Resurrection it shall spring up into an *incorruptible* and *immortal* Substance, perfectly *refined* from all mortal and corruptible Principles; for so our Saviour pronounces of those who shall be accounted worthy to attain to this blessed Resurrection, that *they cannot die any more*, Luke xx. 36. which is a plain Argument, that our mortal Body shall not be merely *varnished* and *gilded* over with an *external* Glory and Beauty, but that all *inward* Principles of Corruption shall be utterly *purged* out of its *Nature*, so that it shall not be preserved immortal merely by the Force of an *external* Cause, but be so far immortal in *itself*, as not to have any Tendency to Death in its *Nature* and *Constitution*: For either it will be so liquid, that should its Parts be separated by any external Violence, like the divided *Æther*, they will immediately close again, or else so *firm* and *compact*, that no external Violence will be able to divide them; and thus having no *Alloy* of corrupt Principles in its *Nature*, no Quarrels or Discords between *contrary Qualities*, and being perpetually acted by a most *happy*, *sprightly* and *vivacious Soul*, which will every Moment diffuse a vast Plenty of Life and Vigour throughout all its Parts; it will be also secure from all *inward* Tendencies to *Mortality*; and being thus fortified both *within* and *without*, against all Attempts towards a *Dissolution*, what should hinder it from living for ever, and flourishing in *immortal Youth*? And thus I have endeavoured to give an Account of the happy Changes which *good* Men's Bodies will undergo in the general Resurrection.

But though they shall all of them be raised with unspeakable *Advantages* and *Improvements*, yet it is apparent from this, 1 *Cor*. xv. that they shall vastly *differ* in the Degrees of their Glory; so *ver*. 41. *There is one Glory of the Sun, and another Glory of the Moon, and another Glory of the Stars; for one Star differeth from another Star in Glory, so also is the Resurrection of the Dead*, *i. e.* as the

Sun is more glorious than the Moon, the Moon than the Stars, and one Star than another, so shall our Bodies at the Resurrection be arrayed with *different* Degrees of Glory; and doubtless these *Differences* of *Glory* in our raised Bodies will arise from those *different* Degrees of *Perfection* to which their respective Souls have arrived; for the more *perfect* those *Souls* are, the more *improved* and *accomplished Bodies* they will require, because, according as they rise in *degrees* of Perfection, their Powers will be enlarged, and their Faculties rendered more active, and consequently will require Bodies more active and powerful. And therefore since at the Resurrection God will *accommodate* every *Soul* with a *Body* suitable to it in its *utmost* Exaltations and Improvements, we may reasonably conclude, that the several Bodies that are raised shall be more or less *glorious*, as the several Souls to which they appertain are more or less advanced in *degrees* of *Perfection:* For the *Fitness* and *Congruity* of Souls to glorified Bodies consists in their *moral Perfection*; and if upon an impossible Supposition, a *wicked Soul* should be mistaken for a *pious* one, and thrust into a *glorified Body*, it would not know what to do with, or how to behave itself in it, but, like a *Swine* in a Palace, would soon be weary of its Habitation, and impatiently long to be restored to its beloved *Stye* and *Mire:* For a glorified *Body* is an Instrument proper only for a glorified *Soul* to act and work with: It is purposely *framed* and *composed* for Contemplation and Love, for Joy and Praise and Adoration; and, what should a *vicious Soul* do with such a Body to whom those heavenly Exercises it was designed for are unnatural? 'Tis *Piety* and *Virtue* that fits and disposeth a Soul to animate and act in a *glorified Body*; and therefore I am apt to think, that as the *animal Disposition* of our *Soul* doth now co-operate with the divine Providence in the *forming* its *animal* Body into the *Womb*, so that *divine* and *spiritual Disposition* which the Soul doth contract before, and improve after its Separation from the Body, will co-operate with the Almighty Power of our Saviour in the *forming* its *new* Body at the *Resurrection*; and that as by the animal Plastick Power of our *Souls*, God did first form our animal *Bodies*, so by this spiritual Plastick Power of it, which is nothing but its *moral Perfection*, he will hereafter form our *spiritual Bodies*; and if so, then the more of that *Perfection* the Soul arrives to at the Resurrection, the more it will *spiritualize* and *glorify* its Body; and so still the more *perfect* it grows, the more it will improve its glorified Body in *Beauty*, *Lustre* and *Activity*, so that as through a transparent *Glass* we plainly discern the Size and Colour of the *Substance* contained in it; so perhaps through the still encreasing Degrees of the *Body's Glory*, the Degree and Size of the *Soul's Perfection* will appear. But whether this be true or no, which I confess is only my *Conjecture*, thus much is certain, that the Bodies of Men will be raised with different *Degrees* of Glory; and therefore since we are assured that the great *End* of the last Judgment will be to distribute to every one according to his Works, we have sufficient Reason to conclude, that the *Bodies* will be glorified more or less in *Proportion* to the Perfection of their *Souls*.

And thus I have endeavoured to give a brief Account of those happy Changes which *good* Mens Bodies must undergo at the *Resurrection*; I proceed therefore in the next Place to shew the woful Change that will then also be made in the Bodies of *wicked* Men; in which I shall be very brief, because we have but a very short and general Account of it in Scripture, where we are only told, that they shall *awake to everlasting Shame and Contempt*, Dan. xii. 2. and that they *shall come forth to the Resurrection of Damnation*, John v. 28. and that upon their Resurrection they shall *be judged according to their Works*, and *cast into the Lake of Fire*, Rev. xx. 13, 15. from whence it is apparent, that they shall be raised for no other *end*, but to be *punished*, to endure the Vengeance which shall then be rendred to them, even the Vengeance of *eternal Fire*; for that will be their Doom, *Depart ye Cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* Since therefore their Resurrection will be

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only in order to their being fetched from *Priſon* to *Judgment*, and ſent from *Judgment* to *Execution*; to be ſure their Bodies will be raiſed in full *Capacity* to ſuffer the fearful Execution of their Doom; that is, with an exquiſite *Senſe* to feel, and an invincible *Strength* to ſuſtain the Torment of eternal Fire: For ſince they muſt ſuffer for ever, they muſt be raiſed both *paſſive* and *immortal* with a *Senſe* as *quick* as Lightning to perceive their Miſery, and yet as durable as an Anvil to undergo the Stroaks of it, which to all *Eternity* will be repeated upon them without any Pauſe or Intermiſſion. Thus ſhall they be raiſed with a moſt *vivacious* and *everlaſting Senſe* of Pain, that ſo they may ever feel the Pangs of Death without ever dying: So St. *Cyril Catech. Illum.* 4. *p.* 26. οἱ ἁμαρτωλοὶ αἰώνια λαμβάνουσι σώματα ἵνα εἰς αἰῶνας τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων ὑπομείνωσι τὴν βάσανον. *i. e.* wicked Men ſhall be cloathed with *eternal Bodies*, that in them they may ſuffer the eternal Puniſhment of their Sins; and ſo they ſhall have *Strength* to *ſuffer* as long as Vengeance hath *Will* to *inflict*: And therefore ſince it is the Will of divine Vengeance that they ſhould ſuffer *eternal Life*, tho divine Power will furniſh them with ſuch Bodies as ſhall be able to *endure* everlaſting Scorching in that Fire, without being ever conſumed by it; for at their *Reſurrection* their wretched Ghoſts ſhall be fetch'd out of thoſe inviſible *Priſons*, wherein they are now reſerved in Chains againſt the Judgment of the great Day, to ſuffer in *that Body* wherein they ſinned; and that therein they may be capable of lingring out an Eternity of Torment, they ſhall be *reunited* to it in ſuch a *fatal* and *indiſſoluble* Bond, as neither *Death* nor *Hell* ſhall ever be able to unlooſe. And this is all the Account we have from Scripture concerning the Change that ſhall be made by the Reſurrection in the Bodies of *wicked* Men, *viz.* That from *weak* and *corruptible* Bodies, they ſhall be changed into *vigorous* and *incorruptible* Ones, and be endued with a quick and everlaſting *Senſe* of all that everlaſting *Puniſhment* which they are raiſed to endure.

Thus having given an Account at large of this *ſecond regal Act*, which our bleſſed Saviour is *yet* to perform, *viz. Raiſing* the *Dead*; I proceed to the

III. And laſt, *viz.* his *judging the World.* In treating of which great and fundamental Article of our Faith, I ſhall endeavour,

Firſt, To prove the *Truth* of the Thing, that our bleſſed Saviour *ſhall* judge the World.

Secondly, To give an Account of the *Signs* and *Fore-runners* of his coming to judge it.

Thirdly, To ſhew the *Manner* of his coming.

Fourthly, To explain the whole *Proceſs* of his *Judgment.*

I. I ſhall endeavour to prove the *Truth* of the Thing, *viz.* that our Saviour *ſhall* judge the World, than which there is no one Propoſition more frequently and plainly aſſerted in holy Scripture. Thus *Acts* xvii. 31. we are told, that *God hath appointed a Day, in the which he will judge the World in Righteouſneſs, by the Man whom he hath ordained*; and that this Man is Jeſus Chriſt we are aſſured, *Acts* x. 42. *And he commanded us to preach unto the People, and to teſtify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of Quick and Dead.* So alſo 2 *Tim.* iv. 1. *I charge thee before God and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the Quick and the Dead at his appearing, and his Kingdom.* And accordingly we are told, that *we ſhall all ſtand before the Judgment-ſeat of Chriſt*, Rom. xiv. 10. *And all appear before the Judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the Things done in his Body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad*, 2 Cor. v. 10. And to the ſame Purpoſe our Saviour himſelf tells us, that *the Father judgeth no Man*, that is immediately, *but hath given all Judgment to his Son*; and afterward he gives the Reaſon of it, *becauſe he is the Son of Man*, John v. 22, 27. that is, becauſe he dutifully complied with his Father's Will, in chearfully condeſcending to cloath himſelf in humane Nature, and therein to offer up himſelf a willing Victim for the Sins of the World; for ſo *Rev.* v. 9, 12. *Worthy is he alone to receive the Book*, (of Judgment) *and*

to open the Seals thereof, because he was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his Blood; worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive the Power and Honour, the Glory and Blessing appendent to his high Office of judging the World. From all which it abundantly appears, that this great Action of judging the World is to be performed by *Christ*. I proceed therefore to the

Second general Head I proposed to treat of, which was to give an Account of the *Signs* and *Fore-runners* of his coming to *Judgment:* For before he actually appears, he will give the secure World a fearful Warning of his coming, by hanging out to its publick View a great many horrible Signs and Spectacles; for thus the Prophet *Joel*, Joel i. 30, 31. *I will shew Wonders in the Heavens, and in the Earth Blood, and Fire, and Pillars of Smoak, the Sun shall be turned into Darkness, and the Moon into Blood, before the great and terrible Day of the Lord*; which Prophecy of his is particularly exemplified by our Saviour, *immediately after the Tribulation of those Days shall the Sun be darkened, and the Moon shall not give her Light, and the Stars of Heaven shall fall, and the Powers of the Heavens shall be shaken, and then shall appear the Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven*, Matth. xxiv. 29, 30. and more particularly, *Luke* xxi. 11, 25. *Great Earthquakes shall be in divers Places, and Famines, and Pestilences, and fearful Sights, and great Signs shall there be from Heaven, and there shall be Signs in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the Stars, and upon the Earth, Distress of Nations with great Perplexity, the Sea and the Waves roaring*; and then it follows, *then shall they see the Son of Man coming.* It is true, this Prophecy of our Saviour immediately respects the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and was in Part *accomplished* in it; several of *these* very *Signs* being a little before the Calamity of that City *actually* exhibited to the publick View of the World, as both *Josephus* and *Tacitus* assure us; and several others of them were exhibited *immediately after the Tribulation of those Days*, in that prodigious Eruption of the *Vesuvius* in *Campania*, the woful Effects whereof were felt not only in *Rome* and *Italy*, but in a great Part of *Africa*, in *Syria*, *Constantinople*, and in all the adjoining Countries, *Vid. Dion. Cass. lib.* 66, 68. but it is apparent, that our Saviour here prophecies of the Judgment of *Jerusalem*, as it was a *Type* and *Representation* of the *general* Judgment; so that though his Prophecy respects *Jerusalem*'s Doom *immediately*, yet through this it looks forward to the final Doom of the World; and therefore, as in foretelling the *former*, he prefigures the *latter*; so in foretelling the foregoing *Signs* of the *former*, he prefigures the foregoing *Signs* of the *latter*. And since he here intended the Signs of *Jerusalem*'s Doom's-day, only for *Types* and *Figures* of those Signs, which shall forerun the Doom's-day of the World; and seeing that *Types* have always *less* in them than are in the *Things* which they typify, and prefigure, there is no doubt, but those Signs, which shall forerun the last Judgment, will be much more *eminent* and *illustrious*, than those of *Jerusalem*'s Judgment, which were intended only to *typify* and *prefigure* them; and accordingly St. *Jerome* tells us of an ancient *Tradition* of the *Jewish* Doctors (to which our Saviour in this Prediction seems plainly to refer) that for *fifteen* Days together, before the *general* Judgment, there shall be transacted upon the Stage of *Nature* a continued Scene of fearful *Signs* and *Wonders*, the *Sea* shall swell to a prodigious Height, and make a fearful Noise with its tumbling Waves; the *Heavens* shall crack Day and Night with loud and roaring Thunders; the *Earth* shall groan under hideous Convulsions, and be shaken with quotidian Earthquakes; the *Moon* shall shed forth purple Streams of discoloured Light; the *Sun* shall be cloathed in a dismal Darkness; and the *Stars* shall shrink in their Light, and twinkle like expiring Candles in the Socket; the *Air* shall blaze with portentous Comets, and the whole *Frame* of *Nature* like a Funeral Room, shall be all hung round with Mourning and with Ensigns of Horror; and when these *fatal Symptoms* appear upon the Face of the Universe, then shall the Inhabitants of the Earth mourn, and the Sinners in *Sion* shall be horribly afraid, being loudly *forewarned* by these astonishing Portents of the near Approach of their *everlasting Doom.*

Having

Having thus briefly ſhewn what ſhall be the Signs of our Saviour's coming to Judgment, I ſhall proceed to

III. The *Third* General, which was to ſhew the *Manner* and *Circumſtances* of his Coming; and here we will firſt conſider the *Place from* whence he is to come; *Secondly*, the *State* in which he is to come; *Thirdly*, the *Carriage* on which he is to come; *Fourthly*, the *Equipage* with which he is to come; *Fifthly*, the *Place to* which he is to come.

I. The *Place from* which he is to come, which is no other than the *higheſt Heavens*, where he now lives and reigns in his exalted and glorified Humanity; for *him muſt the Heavens receive till the Time of the Reſtitution of all Things*, Acts iii. 21. in that bright Region of eternal Day, that Kingdom of Angels and of *Spirits of juſt Men made perfect*; he is to reign in Perſon till the laſt and terrible Day, and from *thence* he is to begin his Circuit, when he comes to keep his general Aſſizes upon Earth, for he is to be *revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels*, 2 Theſſ. i. 7. and to *deſcend from Heaven with a Shout*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 16. ſo that in the Cloſe of thoſe dreadful Alarms which he will give the World, by the preceding Signs of his Coming, he will ariſe from his *Imperial Seat*, at his Father's right Hand, and deſcend in Perſon from thoſe high Habitations of inacceſſible Light, *and every Eye ſhall ſee him* as he comes ſhooting like a Star from his Orb, and the Sight of him ſhall affect the whole World with unſpeakable Joy or *Conſternation*. The *Righteous*, when they ſee him, ſhall lift up their Heads and *rejoyce*, becauſe they know he is *their* Friend, and brings the Day of *their* Redemption with him; *they* ſhall congratulate his Arrival, and welcome him from Heaven with Songs of Triumph and Deliverance: But as for the *Wicked*, they ſhall *ſhriek* and *lament* at the Sight of him, as being conſcious to themſelves, that by a thouſand Provocations they have render'd him their implacable *Enemy*; the Senſe of which will cauſe them to exclaim in the bitter Agonies of their Souls; " O yonder comes he " whoſe *Mercies* we have ſpurned, whoſe *Authority* we have deſpiſed, whoſe " *Laws* we have trampled on, and all the Methods of whoſe *Love* we have " utterly baffled and defeated; and now forlorn and miſerable that we are, " how ſhall we abide his Appearance, or whither ſhall we flee from his Pre- " ſence? O that ſome Rock would fall upon us, or that ſome Mountain " would be ſo pitiful as to ſwallow us up and bury us from his Sight for " ever. But woe are we! within theſe few Moments the Rocks and Moun- " tains will be gone, the Heavens and Earth will melt away, and nothing " will be left beſides ourſelves for his fiery Indignation to prey on." Thus ſhall the *Sight* of the *Son of Man* deſcending from his Throne in the Heavens to judge the World, inſpire his *Friends* with unſpeakable *Joy*, and ſtrike his *Enemies* with *Terrour* and *Confuſion*.

II. We will conſider the *State* in which he is to come, which ſhall be *far different* from that in which he came Sixteen hundred Years ago. Then he came in an *humble* and *deſpicable* Condition, clouded with Poverty and Grief, and oppreſſed with all the *innocent Infirmities* of humane Nature; but, at the laſt Day he ſhall come in his *glorified State*, cloathed in that cœleſtial Body which he now wears at the right Hand of God: For ſo, *Acts* i. 11. the Angel aſſures his Diſciples, *This ſame Jeſus which is taken up from you into Heaven, ſhall ſo come in like manner as you have ſeen him go into Heaven*; that is, he ſhall return to Judgment in that ſelf-ſame glorified Body wherein you now ſee him aſcend: And what a glorious one that is we may partly learn from that Majeſtick Deſcription of it, *Rev.* i. 13, 14, 15, 16. *In the midſt of the Seven Candleſticks was one like the Son of Man, his Head and his Hair were white as Wool, as white as Snow, his Eyes were as a Flame of Fire, and his Countenance was as the Sun ſhining in its Strength.* And partly from his *Transfiguration* on the Mount, which was but a ſhort *Eſſay* and *Specimen* of his *Glorification*; for it is ſaid, that *his Face did ſhine as the Sun*, and that *his Raiment was white as the Light*, white with thoſe Beams of Glory, which, from his transfigured

Body

Body ſhone through all his Apparel, *Matth.* xvii. 2. when therefore he deſcends from Heaven to judge the World, it ſhall be with this *glorified* Body, this Body of *pure* and *immaculate* Splendor, with its Hair ſhining like Threads of Light, its Eyes ſparkling with Beams of Majeſty, and its Face diſplaying a moſt beautiful Luſtre, and its whole Subſtance ſhedding forth from every part a dazling Glory round about it; and this I conceive is that which he himſelf calls *his own Glory*, Luke ix. 26. *When he (i. e.* the Son of Man) *ſhall come in his own Glory*; that is, the Glory of that illuſtrious heavenly Body, wherein he is now array'd; beſides which *bright* and *luminous Robe*, in which, like a Meridian Sun, he ſhall viſibly ſhine over all the World, the afore-cited Text tells us, that he ſhall alſo come *in the Glory of his Father*; by which I conceive is meant that which the *Hebrews* call the *Shechinah*, and the Scripture *the Glory of the Lord*, *viz.* a Body of bright ſhining Fire, in which the Lord was eſpecially preſent, and with which, as the Pſalmiſt expreſſeth it, *he covered himſelf as with a Garment*, Pſal. civ. 2. for in 2 *Theſſ.* i. 8. we are told, that *he ſhall be revealed from Heaven with flaming Fire*; and ſo he deſcended on the Mount *in Fire*, Exod. xix. 18. and that Fire is called *the Glory of the Lord*, Exod. xxiv. 17. That Fire therefore in which our Saviour ſhall *be revealed from Heaven*, ſeems to be of the ſame Nature with that fiery *Shechinah* or viſible Glory of the Lord, in which he deſcended on Mount *Sinai*, though doubtleſs it will be far more glorious, as being deſigned to adorn a far more glorious *Solemnity*. And this *Glory* being added to the *natural* Brightneſs and Splendor of his glorified Body, will cauſe him to *outſhine* the Sun, and drown all the Lights of Heaven in the conquering Brightneſs of his Appearance. So that when he comes forth from his æthereal Palace, and appears upon the eaſtern Heaven, that immenſe Sphere of *viſible Glory* which will then ſurround him, will, in the twinkling of an Eye ſpread and diffuſe itſelf over all the Creation, and cauſe both the Heavens and the Earth to glitter like a flaming Fire.

III. *Thirdly*, We will conſider the *Carriage* on which he is to come, which, as the Scripture tells us, ſhall be a *Cloud*; ſo *Acts* i. 11. the Angels tell his Diſciples, who ſtood gazing after him as he was aſcending into Heaven, *the ſame Jeſus which is taken from you into Heaven, ſhall ſo come in like manner as ye have ſeen him go into Heaven.* Now, if you would know how that was, the ninth Verſe will inform you, where it is ſaid, that *he was taken up, and a Cloud received him out of Sight*, and therefore as he aſcended into Heaven on a Cloud, ſo *in like manner* he ſhall from thence deſcend upon a *Cloud* alſo; and accordingly our Saviour himſelf declares, that *we ſhall ſee the Son of Man coming in the Clouds of Heaven in Power and great Glory*, Matth. xxiv. 30. So alſo, *Matth.* xxvi. 64. *Hereafter ſhall ye ſee the Son of Man ſitting on the right Hand of Power, and coming in the Clouds of Heaven.* And in this very Manner do the *Jews* expect the Coming of their Meſſias, as appears by that Gloſs of one of their ancient Maſters, on *Dan.* vii. 10. *Si meruerint Judæi veniet in nubibus Cæli*; which *Raimund. Pug. Fid.* thus explains, *If ever the* Jews *deſerve that the Meſſias ſhould come, he ſhall come gloriouſly, according to the Prophet* Daniel, that is, *in the Clouds of Heaven.* And then he tells us farther, *Ideo moderni Judæi dicunt Meſſiam non veniſſe, quia non viderunt eum venire in nubibus cæli: Therefore do the modern* Jews *ſay, that the Meſſias is not yet come, becauſe they never ſaw him coming in the Clouds of Heaven.* And it ſeems very probable that the great Offence which the High Prieſt took at our Saviour's ſaying, that *they ſhould hereafter ſee him coming in the Clouds of Heaven*, Matth. xxvi. 64, 65. was this, That it was a *Tradition* among them, that the Meſſias ſhould *ſo* come, and that therefore he looked upon that Saying of our Saviour as a *blaſphemous* Pretence to his being the Meſſias; as much as if he ſhould have ſaid, though I have done enough already to convince you that I am the Meſſias, yet you ſhall hereafter ſee that very Sign of my being the Meſſias, upon which you ſo much depend, and without which you will not believe, *viz. my coming in the Clouds of Heaven*;

Heaven, which therefore I am apt to think is *the Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven*, of which our Saviour speaks, *Matt.* xxiv. 30. For so not only the *Jews* do character their Messias, but also the *Heathens* their Gods cloathed in a *Cloud.* Thus *Homer*, *Iliad. lib.* 5. represents God coming to *Diomedes*, νεφέλῃ εἰλύμενος ὤμους, *with his Shoulders wrapp'd in a Cloud*; and so also *Virgil* represents *Jupiter* coming to assist *Æneas*, *Æn.* 7. —— *Radiis ardentem lucis & auro Ipse manu quatiens ostendit ab æthere nubem*; i. e. *shewing him a Cloud from Heaven, flaming with Rays of Light and Gold.* So that to appear in *Clouds*, it seems, was looked upon both by *Jews* and *Gentiles* as a divine Sign and Character; and accordingly this Sign was given by our Saviour to the *Jews*, in that glorious Representation of a *Captain* with his Legions issuing out of the *Clouds* a little before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, recorded at large both in *Josephus* and *Tacitus*, and will hereafter be given to the whole World in a far more *glorious* Manner, at the opening of the Day of *Judgment*; for then, as the *Psalmist* expresses it, he will *make the Clouds his Chariots*, and ride down from the Heavens on them in a triumphal Procession, shining with unspeakable *Glory* and *Majesty:* So that as when he *ascended* a bright and radiant Cloud was prepared to receive and carry him up to the Seat of the Blessed; so when he *descends* there will be a vast Sheet of condensed *Æther* in the Form of a *radiant Cloud* (and such its probable was that on which he *ascended)* prepared to receive him, and to waft him down from above, to the Place appointed for the general Assizes; and this very *Cloud*, or bright *ætherial Substance*, on which he shall come, will perhaps be that *Throne of Glory*, in *Matth.* xxv. 31. on which he shall sit, whilst he is administring Judgment to the World; for this Substance being not only *naturally luminous*, but also *accidentally illuminated* from the Sun of Righteousness whom it bears; will, to be sure, be sufficiently glorious to deserve the Name of *a Throne of Glory.*

IV. *Fourthly*, We will consider the *Retinue* and *Equipage* with which he shall come, which, as the Scripture tells us, will consist of innumerable Myriads of *Saints* and *Angels*; for immediately upon the Notice that he is going down to solemnize the general Judgment, all those *blessed Spirits* of just Men made perfect, whom he hath redeemed and glorified from the Beginning of the World, shall forsake their Mansions of Glory to *attend* him in his Progress; for so *Enoch prophesied of old, Behold the Lord comes with ten thousand of his Saints to execute Judgment on the ungodly*, Jude xiv. 15. and that by these *ten thousand*, he means the whole Body of the Church Triumphant, is evident by that Passage of St. *Paul*, 1 *Thess.* iii. 13. where he prays, that they might be established in their Christian Course *till the coming of the Lord Jesus with all his Saints*; and indeed, since they are all to *re-assume* their Bodies, and to be made *Partakers* of the glorious *Resurrection*, it's necessary that they should all come down along with him and return to this *Earth*, where the *old Matter* of those Bodies lies, wherein they are to be *re-invested:* And to this illustrious *Retinue* of glorified *Saints* shall be joined the heavenly Hosts of the holy *Angels*; for so Christ himself tells us, *that he shall come in his own Glory, and in his Father's, and of his holy Angels*, Luke ix. 26. and that *he shall come in his Glory, and all his holy Angels with him*, Matth. xxv. 31. And St. *Paul* tells us, that he shall *be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels*, 2 Thess. i. 2. And as the *Angels* shall come down along with him, so in all probability they shall come in a *glorious Appearance*, cloathed in bright *æthereal* Bodies, in which to adorn the Triumphs of that glorious *Day*, they shall be conspicuous to all the Inhabitants of the Earth. Neither shall their coming with him be only for *Shew* and *Pomp*; but the Scripture plainly tells us, that they shall *minister* to him in that great Transaction: For at his issuing forth from the Heaven of Heavens, these mighty Hosts of *Angels* shall *march before* him, with the *Arch-angel* in the Head of them, who, with a mighty Voice or Sound, like that of a *Trumpet*, shall send forth an *awakening Summons* to all the Inhabitants of the Grave to come forth and appear before the Judgment-Seat; at which tremendous

mendous *Voice*, which with an *all enlivening Power*, ſhall be reverberated through all the Vault of *Heaven*, and penetrate the moſt ſecret Repoſitories of the *Earth*, the *Dead* ſhall *riſe*, and the *Living* ſhall be *changed* and *transfigured*, and all ſhall be ſet before the dread Tribunal to undergo their *Tryal*, and receive their *Doom*: For ſo, 1 Theſſ. iv. 16. *For the Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Archangel, and the Trump of God, and the Dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt*; and in 1 Cor. xv. 52. the Reſurrection of the Dead is made the Conſequence of the ſounding this Trumpet, *for the Trumpet ſhall ſound, and the Dead ſhall be raiſed incorruptible*; and ſo alſo *Mat.* xxiv. 31. our Saviour tells us, that at his coming on the Clouds of *Heaven*, he will *ſend his Angels with a great Sound of a Trumpet, and they ſhall gather together his Elect from the four Winds*; from whence it is evident, that the *Angels* ſhall then *miniſter* to him in *raiſing* the Dead, and *aſſembling* them to Judgment; and hence that which is called the *Voice* of the *Archangel* in the above-cited, 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 10. is elſewhere called the *Voice of the Son of God*, John v. 25. becauſe as it will be animated by his *Power*, ſo it will be pronounced by his *Authority*; and as they ſhall *miniſter* to him in *raiſing* the Dead to be *judged*, ſo ſhall they alſo in *executing* his Sentence and Judgment; for ſo *Matt.* xiii. 41, 42. he tells us, *the Son of Man ſhall ſend forth his Angels, and they ſhall gather out of his Kingdom all Things that offend, and them which do Iniquity, and ſhall caſt them into a Furnace of Fire, there ſhall be wailing and gnaſhing of Teeth.* From whence it's evident, that when he hath pronounced *Sentence* on the *Workers of Iniquity*, he will, by the *Miniſtry* of his *Angels*, chaſe them into that everlaſting *Fire*, whereunto he hath *doomed* and *devoted* them. Thus when he comes to judge the World, all his holy *Angels* ſhall come with him, and that not only to contribute to the *Glory* and *Splendour* of his Circuit, but alſo to *miniſter* to him in his Judgment; ſo that his *Retinue* ſhall conſiſt of all the *Inhabitants* of *Heaven*, who ſhall all come forth together with him, and bear him Company in this his *triumphant Progreſs* through the Skies: By which we may eaſily imagine what an *amazing Spectacle* his coming down from Heaven will be to the Inhabitants of the Earth, when they ſhall *ſee* him deſcend from his *imperial Seat*, far above the ſtarry Skies, with all the *Train-Bands* of *Heaven* about him, the *Captain* of the angelical Hoſt in the Front of innumerable *Angels* marching before him, and with his mighty *Trump* ringing a Peal of Thunder through the Univerſe, and with ten thouſand thouſands of the *Spirits* of *juſt* Men made *perfect*, following after him with *Crowns* of Glory on their Heads, and Songs and *Hallelujahs* in their Mouths; O bleſſed Jeſu! how will this glorious and dreadful Sight confound thy *Enemies*, and raviſh thy *Friends*, make thoſe that *hate* thee tremble and gnaſh their Teeth, and thoſe that *love* thee, lift up their Heads and ſhout for Joy!

V. And *laſtly*, We will conſider the *Place* to which he is to come, concerning which, all that is certain from Scripture is this, that when he comes down from Heaven, he will fix his Throne or Judgment Seat in the *Air*, at ſuch a convenient Diſtance from the Earth, as ſhall render him *viſible* to all its Inhabitants. For ſo 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 17. it is ſaid of the Righteous, that after their being *raiſed* or *changed*, they ſhall be *caught up in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air*; which is a plain Argument, that the Lord will ſit in Judgment on them in the *Air*, ſince thither they will be caught up to him after they are *raiſed* and *judged*. Thus in that very *Air*, which is now the Seat of the *Devil*'s Empire, ſhall Chriſt *fix* his *Throne* to *manifeſt* to all the World, the Conſummation of his *Victory* over the Powers of Darkneſs. There ſhall *he* ſit in *Majeſty* and *Glory*, where now the *Devil* and his *Angels* reign, and in the publick View of the World, ſhall even in their own Dominion *ſpoil thoſe helliſh Principalities and Powers*, and having chained them at his Chariot-Wheels, *make a Shew of them openly, triumphing over them*; there where they now *domineer* and *tyrannize* over this wretched World, ſhall he ſet his Foot upon their *Necks*, and from thence ſhall he tread them down into *everlaſting Darkneſs* and *Deſpair*.

Thus

Thus that he may expose himself to the more publick *View*, and the Devil to the more publick *Shame* and *Confusion*, he will chuse to keep his general Assizes in the *Air*. Being therefore arrived into the airy Regions, after a long and glorious Progress, from the highest Heaven, there he shall sit down upon the *Throne of his Glory*, as some think, over against Mount *Olivet*, the Place from whence he ascended, whither all People, Nations and Languages shall be gathered before him to receive their everlasting *Doom*. And now let us imagine with ourselves in what a *glorious* and *tremendous Majesty*, he will appear to the World from his Judgment Seat, whence every Eye shall see him shine in his *own*, his *Father*'s, and his *Angels* Glory, who in a bright *Corona* shall sit round about him like so many Stars about a Sun; and where, as the Prophet *Daniel* describes him, *chap.* vii. *ver.* 9, 10. he shall exhibit himself to publick View, cloathed in *Garments as white as Snow, with the Hair of his Head like the pure Wool, sitting on a Throne like the fiery Flame, and its Wheels as burning Fire, with a fiery Stream issuing out from before him, and thousand thousands ministring unto him, and ten thousand Times ten thousand standing before him, whilst the Judgment is set, and the Books are opened.* And thus I have given a brief Account from Scripture of the *Manner* and *Circumstances* of his coming: From whence I proceed to the

IV. And last General I proposed to treat of, *viz.* to explain the whole *Process* of this *Judgment*. And that we may proceed herein the more distinctly we will consider it with respect to those twofold Objects; *viz.* the *Righteous* and the *Wicked*, about which it is to be exercised; for it is plain from Scripture, that they are not to be judged *promiscuously* one among another as they come, but the *Sheep* are to be separated from the *Goats*, the *Good* from the *Bad*, and to be tried and sentenced *apart* from one another, *Matth.* xxv. 32, 33. *And he, i. e.* the Son of Man, *shall separate them from one another, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats, and he shall set the Sheep on his Right Hand, and the Goats on the Left*; in which Separation the *Precedency* will be given to the *Sheep* or *Righteous*, who are to be judged *first*; for so the Scripture assures us, that *the Dead in Christ are to rise first*, and that after they have undergone their *Judgment*, they are immediately to be wafted up into the Air, there to meet the Lord, and to sit as *Assessers* with him in that Judgment, which he shall *afterwards* pass upon the Wicked, *vide* 1 *Thes.* iv. 15, 16, 17. compared with 1 *Cor.* vi. 2. In explaining therefore the *Process* of this *Judgment*, we will treat of it in the same Order wherein it will be transacted, beginning first with the *Judgment* of the *Righteous*; in which according to the Scripture Account of it, there are these five Things implied: 1. Their *Citation* or *Summons*. 2. Their Personal *Appearance* before the Judgment Seat. 3. Their *Trial*. 4. Their *Sentence*. 5. Their *Assumption* into the Clouds of *Heaven*.

I. This Judgment of the *Righteous* includes their *Citation* or *Summons*, which as was observed before, is to be performed by the *Voice* or *Trump* of the *Arch-angel, i. e.* by an *audible Shout* or *Noise* made by the Prince of *Angels*, and sounding throughout the Universe, like the mighty Blast of a Trumpet. For as it was anciently the Manner of Nations, to gather their Assemblies by the sound of a *Trumpet*; so by the same Sound the Scripture tells us, God will assemble the World of Men to Judgment, and that this shall be a real *audible Sound* like that of a *Trumpet*, though proceeding from no other Instrument than that of the *Arch-angel*'s *Mouth*, I see no reason to doubt; because with such a Noise we read God did descend upon Mount *Sinai*, *Exod.* xix. 16. and why may we not as well understand the One in a literal Sense as the other, it being no more improper in the *Nature* of the Thing, for God to proclaim by such a Sound his coming to *judge* the World, than it was, his coming to give *Laws* to *Israel*. But then together with this mighty *Voice* or *Trump* of the Arch-angel, there shall proceed from Christ a divine *Power*, even his *Holy Spirit*, by which he raised himself from the Dead, by whose omnipotent Agency all those holy *Relicks* of the Bodies of his *Saints*, which are now scattered about the World,

ſhall be *gathered up, re-united,* and *re-organized* into glorious Bodies; for ſo the Apoſtle attributes the Reſurrection of our Bodies to the Holy Ghoſt, *Rom.* viii. 11. *For if the Spirit of him that raiſed up Jeſus from the Dead dwell in us, he that raiſed up Chriſt from the Dead, ſhall alſo quicken our mortal Bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us;* and the old Materials of their Bodies being thus *re-united* and *reformed* by the powerful Energy of the *Holy Ghoſt,* accompanying the Sound of the *Arch-angel*'s Trump, thoſe *ſaintly Spirits,* which anciently inhabited them, and which are now come down from Heaven with their Saviour, ſhall every one *re-enter* its own proper *Body,* and animate it with *immortal* Vigour and Activity, and whilſt the *dead* Saints are thus ariſing, thoſe who ſhall then be living, and have not taſted Death, ſhall by the ſame Almighty Power be *changed, transformed* and *glorified* in the twinkling of an Eye, 1 *Cor.* xv. 51, 52. which being tranſacted, they ſhall all be gathered together, by the *Miniſtry* of the *Holy Angels,* from all Parts of the Earth, before the Judgment Seat of Chriſt, *Matth.* xiii. 27. For,

II. This *Judgment* of the *Righteous* doth alſo include their *Perſonal Appearance* before the Judgment Seat. What this *Judgment Seat* will be, hath been briefly hinted before, *viz.* a vaſt Body of luminous *Æther,* condenſed into the Form of a bright and radiant Cloud, and placed in the Region of the *Air,* at a convenient Diſtance from the Earth, ſtreaming with Light from every Part and caſting forth an unſpeakable Glory; for which Cauſe it is called the *Throne of his Glory,* and is deſcribed by St. *John* to be a *great white* or refulgent *Throne,* Rev. xx. 11. out of which *Lightnings and Thunders* are ſaid to proceed, *Rev.* iv. 5. which implies, that it will be a *Cloud,* it being from *Clouds* that Thunders and Lightnings do proceed. And before this glorious *Tribunal* or bright *Judgment Seat,* ſhall all the Aſſembly of the *Righteous* appear to undergo a merciful *Tryal,* and receive a *happy* Doom. Here ſhall the glorious Company of the *Apoſtles,* the goodly Fellowſhip of the *Prophets,* the noble Army of *Martyrs,* the holy *Church* throughout all the World, both Militant and Triumphant, meet, and in one entire Body preſent themſelves before their bleſſed *Redeemer;* who looking down from his exalted Throne, ſhall at one View ſee all the Congregation of his *Saints* before him, and with infinite Complacency ſurvey the Fruit of the *Travel* of his *Soul,* and the mighty Purchaſe of his *precious Blood;* for ſo the Apoſtle tells us, that *we muſt all ſtand before his Judgment Seat,* Rom. xiv. 10.

III. This *Judgment* of the Righteous doth alſo include their *Tryal;* for ſo the Apoſtle aſſures us, *We muſt all appear (i. e.* we Righteous as well as others) *before the Judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the Things done in his Body,* 2 *Cor.* v. 10. which plainly implies, that even the *Righteous* ſhall undergo an impartial *Tryal* of their Deeds; that ſo they may receive a *Reward* proportionable to them; and more expreſſly, *Rom.* xiv. 12. he tells us, that *we muſt every one of us give an Account of himſelf to God,* and if *every one,* then to be ſure the *Righteous* muſt as well as the *Wicked;* not that there will be any doubt of the *Righteouſneſs* of the *Righteous* in the Breaſt of the Judge, to whoſe All-ſeeing Eye, the darkeſt Secrets of all Hearts lie open; but yet for other Reaſons, it is highly convenient *they* ſhould undergo a *Tryal* as well as *others:* As firſt, for the more *ſolemn* and *publick Vindication* of their wronged *Innocence,* that all that Infamy and Scandal with which their malicious Enemies have beſpattered them, may be wiped off before Men and Angels; and that being aſſoiled before all the World, they may triumph for ever in a *bright* and *glorious Reputation.* And *Secondly,* that all thoſe *brave* and *unaffected* Acts of ſecret *Piety* and *Charity,* to which none but *God* and *themſelves* were *conſcious,* may be brought into the *open Light,* and to their everlaſting Renown, *proclaimed* throughout all the vaſt Aſſembly of Spirits; for then we ſhall ſee all thoſe *modeſt Souls* unmaſk'd, whoſe *ſilent* and *retired Graces* do make ſo little Shew and Noiſe in the World, and all their humble *Pieties* and baſhful *Beauties,* which ſcarce any Eye ever ſaw but God's, ſhall be expoſed to the *publick* View and

general Applause of Saints and Angels. *Thirdly*, They shall be tried also for the Vindication of God's *impartial* Procedure in proportioning their *Reward* to their *Virtue*; that so the Degrees of each Man's Proficiency in Piety and Virtue, being exposed to the View of the World by an *impartial Tryal*, Angels and Men may be convinced, that in distributing the different Degrees of Happiness the Almighty Judge is no way *biassed* by a fond *Partiality* or *Respect* of *Persons*; but that he proceeds upon *immutable Principles* of *Justice*, and doth exactly *adjust* and *balance* his *Rewards* with the Degrees and Numbers of our *Deserts* and *Improvements*; that so even those that are set *lowest* in those blessed Forms and Classes of glorious Spirits, may not *envy* those that are above them, or *complain* that they are advanced no higher; but every one may chearfully acknowledge himself to be placed where he ought to be; as being fully convinced, that he is only so many Degrees inferiour to others in *Glory*, as they are superiour to him in Divine *Graces* and *Perfections*. *Fourthly* and *lastly*, The *Righteous* shall undergo this *Tryal* for the more glorious Manifestation of the Divine *Mercy* and *Goodness*: For which Reason I am apt to think that even their *Sins*, of which they have dearly and heartily repented, shall in this their Trial be *exposed* and brought upon the Stage; that so in the free Pardon of such an infinite Number of them, the whole Congregation of the Blessed may behold and admire the *infinite* Extent of the *Divine Mercies*, and be thereby the deeper affected with, and more vigorously excited to celebrate with Songs of Praise the Goodness of their *merciful Judge*. For these Reasons the wise Man tells, *Eccles.* xii. 14 that *God shall bring every secret Thing to Judgment, whether it be good, or whether it be evil*; which Proposition, being universal, must extend to the *Righteous* as well as to the *Wicked*. But yet though their Sores shall be then laid open, it shall be done by a *soft* and *gentle* Hand, by a *serene Conscience*, and a *smiling Judge*, who without any *angry* Look, or *severe* Reflection, or any other Circumstance, but what shall contribute to the Joys and Triumphs of that Day, shall *read over* all the *Items* of their Guilt, and then *cancel* them for ever. For,

IV. This *Judgment* of the Righteous doth also include their *Sentence*. Although to us whose Operations are so slow and leisurely, by reason of the Unwieldiness of these fleshly Organs, with which we act, such a *particular Trial* as hath been before described of such an infinite Number of Men and Women may seem to require an unreasonable *Length* of *Time*, yet if we consider that then both the *Judge*, and those who are to be *judged* shall be array'd in *spiritual* Bodies, in which they will be able to act with *unspeakable Nimbleness* and *Dispatch*, we shall find that a *little Time* comparatively may very well suffice for so great a Transaction; for the *Judge* being one that can attend to *infinite Causes* at once without any Distraction, and they who are to be *judged*, being by reason of their *Spirituality*, in a Condition to attend to every *one's* Trial, while they are undergoing their *own*, I see no reason we have to imagine, that they shall be tried *successively* one after another; and if not, why may we not suppose, that we shall all be tried *together* at the same Time, and consequently that the Trial of *all* may be transacted in as *short* a Time as the Trial of *one*. And that they shall all be *tried together*, is very probable, since it is apparent from Scripture, that they shall all be *sentenced* together, for thus *Matth.* xxv. 34. *Then shall the King say to those on his right Hand, i. e.* to them all together, *Come ye Blessed*, &c. Having first by an *accurate* and *impartial* Trial manifested their Integrity to all the World, he shall arise out of his flaming Throne, and with an audible Voice, and smiling Majesty, pronounce their Sentence *all together* in these, or such like Words, *Come ye blessed Children of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the World*; to which welcome Sentence they will doubtless all immediately resound a joyful Choir of *Hallelujahs* through Heaven and Earth; *Allelujah, Salvation, and Glory, and Power to be the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his Judgments; Salvation be unto our Lord that sitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb; for wonderful are*

thy Works, O Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy Ways, O thou King of Saints. And now all their Business being *finished* here below, they shall from henceforth be no longer detained in this Vale of *Tears* and *Misery*, but with overjoyed Hearts shall take their Leave of it for ever. For,

V. And *lastly*, Another Thing implied in this their *Judgment*, is their *Assumption* into the *Clouds* of Heaven. For their blessed Lord having thus publickly acquitted and pronounced them blessed, they shall immediately feel the happy Effect of it; for now he will no longer suffer them to stand below at the *Bar*, but from thence will call them up to his *Tribunal*, there to give them a nearer Access to his beloved *Person*, and more intimate Participation of his *Glory*. At which powerful *Call* and *Invitation* of his, they shall in an Instant all take Wing together, like a mighty Flock of pure and innocent Doves, and fly aloft into the Air, singing and warbling as they go to meet their Redeemer in the Clouds of Heaven. For so the Apostle, in 1 *Thess.* iv. 17. *Then* (that is, after their Resurrection and Judgment) *we which are alive and remain*, who never died, but only have been changed and glorified, *shall be caught up together with them*, who shall be raised from the Dead, *into the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air, and so we shall be ever with the Lord.* For to be sure that rapturous Love which the *Sight* and *Sentence* of their Saviour hath by this Time kindled in their pious Breasts, will wing their Souls with *vehement* Desire to be with him, and then being cloathed with glorified Bodies, that are as *vigorous* and *active* as their *Souls*; as *nimble* and *expedite* as their *Thoughts* and *Wishes*, it will be in their *Power* soon to accomplish their *Desire*, and fly from hence up to the Throne of their Lord.

And now this being the *first* general Meeting of the blessed Jesus and his Church; the *first* Interview that ever was between the *heavenly Bridegroom* and his *holy Bride*; O the dear Welcomes, the infinite mutual Congratulations that will pass between them; How will they now melt in Love and dissolve in mutual Flames! Now when like long absent Lovers, they are safe arrived into each others Arms, never, never to be parted more.

And now this joyful *Meeting* being consummated, they begin to prepare for a most *dreadful Solemnity*, and that is the *Judgment* of the *Wicked*: In order to which the Judge will reassume his Throne, and place his *Saints* all round about in shining Circles, Ten thousand thousand together, that so as his Assessors, they may bear a *part* in the ensuing Judgment: For this the Apostle asserts as a notorious Principle of our Christian Faith; *Know ye not that the Saints shall judge the World*, 1 Cor. vi. 2. that is, that they shall not only *accuse* and *condemn* the wicked World by the holy *Example* of their Lives; but also, that they shall give their *Votes* and *Suffrages* to that dreadful Sentence which Christ shall pass upon them. And now the *Judge* and his *Assessors* being set, proceed we to the

II. *Second* Judgment, which is, that of the *Wicked*, in which there are also five Particulars included: *First*, their *Citation*: *Secondly*, their personal *Appearance*: *Thirdly*, their *Tryal*: *Fourthly*, their *Sentence*: *Fifthly*, their *Execution*.

I. Their *Citation*: For the *first* Judgment being finished, it is probable a *new* Summons will be given by the *Voice* or *Trump* of the *Archangel*, to assemble the *wicked* World to their Judgment, upon hearing of which, all those *wicked* Souls that have left their Bodies, and been hitherto confined in some dark Prison of the Creation, shall be forced to leave their *dismal Habitations*, in which they would a thousand times rather chuse to continue for ever, if they might have their own Option, than to undergo that *fearful Judgment* whereunto they are cited; but being *dragged* into the open Light again, by those *Devils* who have been hitherto their Jailors, they shall every one be *forced* to put on those old accursed *Bodies* of theirs, in which they contracted those Crimson Guilts which now they must expiate in eternal Flames; and now the *Souls* of the Dead, being shut up in their *Bodies* again, like Prisoners in a sure Hold, and there secured by an *immortal* Tie from ever making another

escape

escape, the Bodies of the Living shall by a miraculous Change be render'd at once so *tender* and *sensible*, that the *least* Touch of *Misery* shall pain them, and yet so *strong* and *durable*, that the greatest *Loads* of Misery shall never be able to sink them; and thus being all of them put into an *immortal* Capacity of *suffering* and thereby prepared to undergo the fearful Doom which awaits them, they shall from all Parts of the World be driven before the Judgment Seat of Christ. For,

II. This *Judgment* of the *Wicked* implies also their *personal Appearance* at our Saviour's Tribunal: For so St. *John* in his prophetick Vision of the Day of Judgment, *saw the Dead both small and great standing before God*, Rev. xx. 12. and in *Matth.* xxv. 31, 32. we are told, that *when the Son of Man sits down upon the Throne of his Glory all Nations shall be gathered before him*; that is, the impure Goats as well as the innocent Sheep, as he afterwards explains himself. And now, good Lord, what a tragical Spectacle will here be? An innumerable Number of *self-condemned* Wretches assembled together before the Tribunal of an Almighty and implacable *Judge*, quaking and trembling under the dire Expectations of a fearful and irrevocable *Doom*, and with weeping Eyes, pale Looks and ghastly Countenances, aboding the *miserable Fate* that attends them. For thus it is represented, *Rev.* i. 7. *Behold he cometh with Clouds, and every Eye shall see him, they also which pierced him, and all Kindreds of the Earth shall wail because of him*; and well they may, considering how they treated *him*, and what little Reason they have upon that account to expect any Favour at his *Hands*; for to be sure the *Sight* of him must give a dreadful Alarm to their *Consciences*, and suggest to them the sad Remembrance of the innumerable *Provocations* they have given him. Look up, O ye miserable Creatures, see yonder is that *glorious Person* whose *Authority* you have so insolently affronted, whose *Name* you have so impiously *blasphemed*, whose *Mercies* you have so obstinately *rejected*, behold with what a *stern* and *terrible Majesty* he sits upon yonder flaming Throne, from whence he is now just ready to exact of ye a dreadful Account for all your past *Rebellions* against him; but, O unhappy and forlorn! see how they droop and hang their Heads, as being both *ashamed* and *afraid* to look their terrible *Judge* in the Face, whose incensed Eye sparkles upon them with such an insufferable *Terror* and *Indignation* as they are no longer able to endure, but are forced in the bitterest *Anguish* and *Despair*, that ever humane Souls were seized with, to *cry out to the Rocks and Mountains to fall upon them, and to hide them from the Face of him that sits upon the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb.*

III. Another Particular imply'd in this *Judgment* of the *Wicked*, is their *Tryal*; for so 1 *Cor.* iv. 5. we are told, that in this fearful Day of Reckoning, *God will bring to light the hidden Things of Darkness, and make manifest the very Counsels of the Heart*; and this will be no hard Matter to effect, considering that he who is to be the *Judge* of these guilty Criminals, hath been a constant *Witness* to all their Actions, that his all-seeing Eye hath *traced* them all along through all their secret Mysteries and dark Intrigues of Iniquity, and hath kept an exact *Record* of them in the Book of his Remembrance; so that to *convict* them of their Guilts, he will need do no more but only produce his own *Registers*, and expose what he hath *there* recorded to the View of the World; and there the Wretches will see *themselves* transcribed, and all their abominable Actions exactly *copied* from their first Originals; there they will find all their secret *Machinations*, their dark *Cheats*, their lewd *Imaginations*, and hypocritical *Intentions* recorded in the most legible Characters; and perceiving themselves thus shamefully *unstrip'd* and *uncased* before the World, their very *Inwards* dissected, and the smallest Threds and Fibres of their *Hearts* laid open and exposed to the View of Men and Angels, their own *Shame* and intolerable Rack of their *Consciences* will force them to *confess* their Charge, and *proclaim* themselves guilty before all that vast Congregation of Spirits. But, O the inexpressible *Horror* and *Confusion* these wretched Souls will then be seized with when they

shall

ſhall ſee themſelves thus *publickly unmasked* and turned inſide outwards, and be forced to ſtand forth like ſo many *loathſome* Spectacles before God and his Angels, without any *Excuſe* or *Retreat* for their Shame, without any *Veil* to hide their Infamy and Bluſhes! when their filthy Practices ſhall be no longer confined to the Talk of a Town or a Village, but be *proclaimed* in the hearing of all the rational World: O now it would be happy for them if as formerly, they could *drown* the Retorts of their *Conſcience* in Noiſe and Laughter, and forget its cutting Repartees, which were always uneaſy to *bear*, but impoſſible to *anſwer*. But alas! thoſe jolly Days are gone, and now in *deſpite* of themſelves they muſt liſten with Horror and Confuſion of Face, to what thoſe two great Judges, *Jeſus* and their own *Conſciences* unanimouſly give in Charge againſt them. Thus he whoſe piercing Eye doth now penetrate their *Hearts*, and ranſack every Corner of their *Souls*, will in that great Day of Diſcoveries bring forth all that *ſecret Filth* that is there repoſited, and *expoſe* it for an *infamous Spectacle* to the publick View of Men and Angels.

IV. Another Particular implied in this *Judgment* of *wicked* Men is their *Sentence*. Their *Tryal* being now over, in which their Guilt hath been ſufficiently *evinced* and *detected* to their everlaſting Infamy and Reproach, they will by this Time have received the *Sentence* of Death within *themſelves*, and ſtand condemned in the Judgment of all the *World*; the Righteous *Judge*, who is too *great* to be overawed, too *juſt* to be bribed, and too much *provoked* to be intreated, whoſe Ears are now for ever *ſtopped*, and whoſe Bowels are impenetrably *hardened* againſt all farther Overtures of Mercy, will with a ſtern Look and terrible Voice, pronounce that dreadful Doom upon them, *Go ye curſed into everlaſting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels*; which though it be of a horrible Import, will appear ſo *juſt*, conſidering the horrible Things which have been *charged* and *proved* againſt them, that it will be immediately ſeconded with the *unanimous Suffrage* of all that bright Corona of Glorified *Saints* that ſit as *Aſſeſſors* round the Throne, who with one Conſent will all cry out together, *Juſt and Righteous art thou, O Judge of the World, in all thy Ways:* But, O the fearful Shrieks and Lamentations that will then be heard from thoſe poor condemned Creatures! For if A *Lord have Mercy upon thee*, A *take him Jailor* from an *earthly Judge*, be able to extort ſo many Sighs and Tears from a hardned Malefactor, what will A *go ye curſed* from the Mouth of the *righteous Judge* of the World, and when ſo many *Millions* of Men and Women ſhall be all involved together in the ſame *Doom*, and all at once lamenting their diſmal *Fate*; Lord, what a horrible Out-cry will they make? Now in the bitter Agonies of their Souls they will cry to Heaven for *Mercy, Mercy*; but alas! poor Souls, they cry too *late*; their *Judge* was once as importunate with them to have Mercy upon themſelves; but becauſe when *he called they* refuſed, when *he* ſtretched forth his Hands *they* regarded not, now when *they* call *he* will not anſwer, when *they* cry *he* will not hear, but will *laugh* at their *Calamity*, as they did at his *Counſel*, and mock when their Fear and Deſtruction is come upon them.

V. And *laſtly*, Another Particular implied in this *Judgment* of the *Wicked*, is the *Execution* of their Sentence. For immediately after their Sentence is paſt, by which they ſtand doomed to *everlaſting Fire*, an *everlaſting Fire* ſhall be kindled round about them, a Fire, which within a few Moments ſhall ſpread itſelf over all this *lower World*, and convert the whole *Atmoſphere* about us into a *Furnace* of inquenchable Flames: For then all thoſe *fiery Particles* which are every where intermingled with theſe Terreſtial Bodies, and have hitherto been kept within their *proper Limits*, ſhall be *diſintangled* and ſet *free* from thoſe more groſs and ſluggiſh ones that now bind and fix them, and ſwarm together like ſo many Sparks into one *huge Globe* of *Fire*, which from the lowermoſt Center of the Earth, ſhall ſpire up and kindle upon all that airy Heaven above, and with one continued Flame fill all the vaſt *Expanſum*; all that *fiery Matter* which is now diſperſed up and down within the Entrails of the Earth, ſhall by degrees gather together into *Rivers* of *Fire*, with rolling to and fro within, to

force their Way into the open Air, will perhaps produce those prodigious *Earthquakes*, of which our Saviour speaks, by which at length the Earth being cleft and torn, it shall every where vomit out *Torrents* of *Fire* from its flaming Bowels; and at the same time the *Sea* shall boil and swell, and roar like Water in a Seething-pot, 'till 'tis all evaporated by the struggling Flames from below, which having rarified its Waters into Vapours, shall kindle those Vapours into Flames; and at the same Time also the *Heavens* above shall groan and crack with incessant *Thunder*, accompanied with thick and fearful Flashes of *Lightning*, which joining with those vast Streams of Fire, that will be continually issuing out of the *Earth* and *Sea*, will make such a prodigious Deluge of Flames, as will quickly overflow the whole World. For thus we are assured from Scripture; that *the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat, and the Earth and the Works that are therein, shall be burnt up*, 2 Pet. iii. 10. So also St. *John* in his Vision of the Day of Judgment, *Rev.* xx. 11. *I saw a great white Throne; and him that sat on it, from whose Face the Earth and the Heaven fled away, and there was found no Place for them*; not that the *Matter* of them shall be *annihilated*, but the *Form* of them shall be *destroyed* by their being converted into an everlasting Fire; and in this Fire shall those condemned Wretches live and suffer to eternal Ages. Hence it is called *the Vengeance of eternal Fire*; and we are told, that it will be *in flaming Fire*, that the Lord Jesus will *render Vengeance to all that know not God and obey not his Gospel*, 2 Thess. i. 8. And that this flaming Fire shall be the Conflagration of the World, that of St. *Peter* seems plainly to imply, 2 *Pet.* iii. 7. *But the Heavens and the Earth which are now —— are kept in store reserved unto Fire, against the Day of Judgment and Perdition of ungodly Men*; and being reserved unto Fire against the Day of Perdition of ungodly Men, we may justly conclude, that the Fire it is reserved to, will be the Perdition of ungodly Men. Thus upon our Saviour's pronouncing those dreadful Words, *Go ye cursed into everlasting Fire*, the Persons concern'd will immediately perceive the dire Effects; for all on a sudden they will see the *Clouds* from above, and the *Earth* from beneath casting forth *Torrents* of *Fire* upon them, which in an Instant will set all the World in a Blaze about their Ears: At the Sight of which, all this wretched World will be turned into a mournful Stage of *Horrors*, in which the miserable *Actors* being seized with inexpressible *Amazement* to see themselves all on a sudden encompassed on every Side with Flames, will raise a hideous *Roar* and *Out-cry*, *Millions* of burning Men and Women *shricking* together, and their Noise shall mingle with the Archangel's *Trumpet*, with the *Thunders* of the *dying* and *groaning* Heaven, and the *Crack* of the dissolving World, that is sinking into eternal Ruins. In which *miserable State* of Things, whither can the poor Creatures fly, or where can they hope to find a Sanctuary? If they go up to the Tops of the *Mountains*, there they are but more openly *exposed* to the dreadful Lightnings of Heaven; if they go down into the *Holes* and *Caverns* of the *Rocks*, there they will be *swallowed* up in the burning Furnaces of the Earth; if they descend into the *Deep*, there they will be soon overtaken with a Storm of Fire and Brimstone; and where-ever they go, the Vengeance of God will still pursue them with its everlasting Burnings. And thus having *no Retreat* left them, *no Avenue* to *escape out* of this burning World, here they must remain for ever surrounded with *Smoak*, and *Fire*, and *Darkness*, and wrap'd in fierce and merciless *Flames*, which like a Shirt of burning Pitch will stick close to, and pierce through and through their passive Bodies, and for ever *prey* upon, but never *consume* them.

And now the Almighty Judge having seen his dreadful *Sentence executed*, will arise from his Throne, and from thence return to the Seat of the Blessed in a *solemn* and *glorious Triumph*, with all his holy Myriods of *Angels* and *Saints*, who as they follow him through the Air and *Æther*, will with loud *Hosannah's* and triumphant *Acclamations* celebrate the Praises of their *Redeemer*. Thus shall the *Ransomed* of the Lord, return with him, with Songs to the heavenly Zion, and everlasting *Joy* shall be upon their *Heads*, and everlasting *Praises*

Praises in their *Mouths.* For being arrived into those *blissful Regions*; there in those glorified Bodies, which they put on at their Resurrection, they shall live for ever in unspeakable *Pleasures* and *Delights*, and be entertain'd not only with all that *Happiness* which they enjoy'd in the State of their Separation, when they were only *blessed Spirits*; but also with all the *Satisfaction* and *Delights* that their *glorified Bodies* can require and enjoy. So that now their Blessedness shall be *consummate*, and all the Capacities of their humane Nature compounded of Body and Soul, shall be *fulfilled* with *Bliss*, till they overflow and can contain no more. But *wherein* the Happiness of their *glorified Bodies* shall consist, I shall not presume to enquire, the Scripture being silent concerning it. And what the Happiness of their *Souls* shall be, hath been shewn at large before, *Part* I. *c.* 3, 4. So that as to that *State* of *eternal Life*, in which our Saviour shall place his *faithful Servants*, in the Conclusion of this great Judgment, I need say no more of it in this Place.

SECT. XII.

Concerning the Conclusion and Surrender of the Kingdom of Christ.

WHEN our Saviour hath finished that *last* and most *glorious* Act of *Royalty*, viz. *judging* the World, and hath finally *condemned* to everlasting Fire the irreclaimable *Enemies* of God, and *crowned* all his *faithful Subjects* with eternal Glory and Beatitude; the Apostle tells us, *He shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father*, 1 Cor. xv. 24. For our better understanding of which, we are to consider, that the Kingdom of Christ is two-fold: *First*, *Essential*, as he is God essential, and doth subsist in the Divine Essence, by the *super-eminent Perfections* of which he being exalted above all Things, hath an *essential Right* of Dominion over all Things; and this is *co-eternal* with himself, and is as *inseparable* to him as his *Being*; *this* he can no more deliver up than he can his *Godhead*, which without ceasing to *be* can never cease to be *supreme* over all Things. But then in the *second* Place, there is his *mediatorial* Kingdom, which is that of which we have hitherto been treating, and this, as hath been shewn before, was by solemn *Compact* and *Agreement* conferr'd upon him by the *Father*, upon *condition* that he should assume our Nature, and therein make *Expiation* for our Sins; in consideration whereof the Father *obliged* himself to grant a *Covenant* of *Grace* to the sinful World, and to constitute him the *Mediator* of it; by which *mediatorial Office* he is authorized to *rule* for *God* according to the Tenour of that gracious *Covenant*, as well as to *intercede* for *us*; and in *ruling* for *God* according to that *Covenant*, he is to *crown* and *reward* all such as return to, and persevere in their *Duty*, with everlasting Happiness, and to render eternal *Vengeance* to all such as obstinately persist in their *Rebellion.* So that when this is done (as it will be in the Conclusion of the Day of Judgment) the whole Business of his *mediatorial* Kingdom is at an end; then the *Covenant*, of which he is now Mediator, will be compleatly *excuted*, and consequently his *Mediation* will *cease*, as being of no farther Use, and having no farther Part to act. For now *God* and *Man* being made compleatly one, the Office of a Mediator *ceases* of its own accord; for *a Mediator is not a Mediator of one*, Gal. iii. 20. and therefore the two Parties being perfectly *united*, there is no farther Use of a *Mediator* between them. Wherefore as our *beatifick Vision* will supercede the Necessity of his *prophetick Office*, to teach and instruct us; as our *Perfection* and intire *Fruition* will supercede the Necessity of his *priestly Office*, to offer and intercede for us; so the Security of our *Possession of both* will supercede the Necessity of his *kingly Office*, to protect and defend us; and therefore when our Affairs are once reduced to this happy Issue, his *kingly Office*, as well as all other Parts of his *Mediatorship*, will for ever *cease*. But since this great Mystery is no where expresly delivered in Scripture, but only in that forecited, 1 *Cor.* xv. I shall endeavour

to give a brief Account of the whole Passage, which lies in *ver.* 24, 25, 26, 27, 28. *Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all Rule and all Authority, and all Power, for he must reign till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet; the last Enemy that shall be destroyed is Death: for he hath put all Things under his Feet: but when he saith all Things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all Things under him, and when all Things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him which did put all Things under him, that God may be all in all*; the whole Sense and Meaning of which Passage, I shall cast into these Propositions;

First, That the *Kingdom* or *Dominion* here spoken of, was committed to him by God the *Father*.

Secondly, That he is to possess this *Kingdom* and *Dominion* so long and no longer, as till all Things are actually *subdued* to him.

Thirdly, That during his *Possession* of it, he is *subject* to the *Father*.

Fourthly, That after his *delivering* it up to the *Father*, he will be otherwise *subject* to him than he is now.

Fifthly, That the *Son* being thus *subjected* to the *Father*, all *Power* and *Dominion* shall from thenceforth, be immediately exercised by the *Deity*.

I. That the *Kingdom* or *Dominion*, here spoken of, was committed to him by God the *Father*; and this is expressly affirmed, *ver.* 27. *For he* (*i. e.* the Father) *hath put all Things under his Feet*, which Words are a Quotation of *Psalm* viii. 6. *Thou madest him to have Dominion over the Works of thy Hands*; *thou hast put all Things under his Feet*; which Words are to be understood *literally* of the *first Adam*, but *mystically of the second*; as is evident not only because 'tis here applied to Christ by St. *Paul*, but also by the Author to the *Hebrews*, Heb. ii. 7, 8. where he expressly tells us, that it was God the Father that *crowned* Christ *with Glory and Honour, and that did set him over the Works of his Hands, and put all Things in Subjection under his Feet*; and accordingly our Saviour himself declares, that *all Power in Heaven and Earth was given him*, i. e. by the Father, and that it was *the Father that committed all Judgment to him*; and the Apostle expressly tells us, that it was *God that exalted him with his own right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour*, Acts v. 31. From all which it is evident, that the Dominion which the Apostle here treats of, is not the *Essential Dominion* of Christ, which as he is God *Essential*, is *Co-eternal* with him; but that *mediatorial* Dominion which was *committed* to him by the voluntary Disposal of his *Father*, and which once he had not, and will hereafter *cease* to have.

II. That he is to possess this *Kingdom* or *Dominion* so long as, and no longer than till all Things are actually *subdued* unto him. So *ver.* 24. you see the Time of his *delivering up this Kingdom*, is then, *when he shall have put down all Rule, and all Authority and Power*; i. e. till he shall have *converted* and *destroyed* all those Powers of the Earth that oppose themselves against him; for so *ver.* 25, 26. *For he must reign till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet, the last Enemy that shall be destroyed is Death*; which plainly implies, that when he hath conquered all *Enemies*, and destroyed *Death*, which is the last Enemy, by giving a glorious *Resurrection* to his faithful Subjects, then, and not till then his *mediatorial* Reign is to conclude: For so, *Psal.* cx. 1. to which the Apostle here refers; the Psalmist brings in *Jehovah the Father*, thus bespeaking *Jehovah* the *Son*, *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right Hand, until I make thine Enemies thy Footstool.* Now to *sit at the right Hand of God*, when ever 'tis applied to our *Saviour*, doth in Scripture always denote his *possessing* and *exercising* this his *mediatorial* Kingdom; so that the Meaning of the Psalmist is this; the *Father* hath commissioned his *Son* to continue the Exercise of his *mediatorial* Dominion, till such Time as either by the Dint of his Almighty Vengeance he hath trampled all his Enemies under Foot, or by the Power of his *Grace* reduc'd them voluntarily to prostrate themselves before him; and indeed, the *End* for which this Kingdom of our Saviour was erected, was to *subdue* the rebellious World to God, and either to *captivate* Men into a *free Submission* to his

his heavenly Will, which is its *first* Intention; or if they will not yield, to make them the Triumph of his everlasting *Vengeance*; which end at the Day of Judgment, will be fully accomplished: For then the *Fate* of all the rational World will be *fixed* and *determined*; then the *faithful* Subjects will be crowned, and the *incorrigible* Rebels condemned, and executed, and so, one way or t'other, all Things will be subdued unto him. So that from henceforth the *End* and *Reason* of this his *mediatorial* Dominion will *cease*, and when the *End* of it *ceaseth*, he who never doth any thing in vain, will immediately deliver it up into those Hands from whence he received it. *For when he shall have put down all Rule, and all Authority and Power*; i. e. conquered and subdued all that resisted and opposed him, *then cometh the End when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God even the Father.*

III. That during his *Possession* of this Kingdom, he is subject to the Father. So *ver.* 27. *But when he saith all Things are put under him, it is manifest that he* (i. e. the Father) *is excepted, which did put all Things under him.* As if he should say, Do not mistake me; for when I say *all Things* are put under *him*, my Meaning is, all Things, *except* God the Father, for it was he that did put all Things under him; and it's manifest that he who gave him this *Superiority* over all Things, must *himself* be *superior* to him; and indeed, considering Christ as *mediatorial* King, he is no more than his Father's *Viceroy*, and doth only act by *Deputation* from him, and rule and govern for him; and hence the Father styles him *his* King, *Psal.* ii. 6. *Yet have I set my King upon my holy Hill of* Zion. So that now he is subject to the Father in the Capacity of a *Vice-King*, to a supreme *Sovereign*, and whatsoever he doth in this Capacity, he doth in his *Father's Name*, and by his *Authority*; for he mediates as for *Men* with God, in doing which he is our *Advocate*; so for *God with* Men, in doing which he is our *King*. God's Part is to *govern* us, and our Part is to sue to him for *Favour* and *Protection*, and *both* these Parts our Saviour acts as *Mediator* between God and us: He acts our Part for us in being *Advocate*, and God's Part for him in being *King*. So that in that Rule and Government which he *now* exercises over us, he is only the *supreme Minister* of his Father's Power and Dominion, and as the Father reigns by his *Ministry*, so he reigns by the *Father's Authority*. But though now while his *mediatorial* Kingdom doth continue, he is *subject* to the Father in the Administration of it, yet from this Passage of St. *Paul* it is evident,

IV. That when he hath *delivered* it up to the Father, he will be otherwise *subject* to him than he is now; for so *ver.* 28. and *when all Things shall be subdued unto him*; that is, *actually*, and as they will be at the Day of Judgment, when the *Good* are crowned, and the *Wicked* consigned to that fearful Execution, *Then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that did put all Things under him*; which necessarily implies, that then he should enter into a *different* State of *Subjection* to the Father, from that wherein he was before. Why *then shall the Son himself be subject to him?* Was he not subject to him before? Yes, doubtless he was; and therefore either this *then* must be impertinent, or then he shall be *so* subject to him as he was not before; before he was subject to him, as he was his *mediatorial* King or *Viceroy*, as he reigned under him, and by his Authority; but *then* he is to be subject to him after a *different* Manner: For the Explication of which it is to be considered, that now the Son considered as *Mediator*, reigns under God in the Right of what he did, and suffered in his human Nature hypostatically united to his Godhead; for it was because *he humbled himself, and became obedient to the Death, even the Death of the Cross, that God highly exalted him*, Phil. ii. 8, 9. Now 'twas as he was Man, that *he became obedient to Death*, and 'twas in the Right of that *Obedience* that God exalted him to his mediatorial Kingdom; so that now as Mediator he not only reigns in his *human Nature*, but in Right of the *Passion* of his *human Nature*; his *mediatorial* Kingdom is the *Purchase* of his *Blood*, by which he both obtained the New Covenant for *us*, and Regal Power to execute it

upon

upon us. When therefore he hath executed it to the full (as we are sure he will do at the Day of Judgment) this *Regal Power* of his which he purchased with his *Blood*, will cease, as having fully accomplished that for which it was given and intended. And now he being to reign no longer in right of the *Sufferings* of his human Nature, his human Nature will be *subject* to the Father in a more *different* Manner than it was *before*: *Before* it was subject to him as *authorized* in consideration of its Passion to reign and govern under him; but *then* having *delivered up* its Reign and Government, it will be subject to him in a more *private Capacity*, as the Presidents of the *Roman* Empire were subject to *Cæsar* while they governed under him, but when they *rendered back* their Character, they became his Subjects in a more *private* Station. Not that the *Humanity* of Christ shall be any way *depressed* or *degraded* by his *delivering up* his *mediatorial Kingdom*; but as an *Ambassador*, after he is discharged of the *Burthen* of his Embassy, doth still retain the *Honour* and *Dignity* of it, so the *human Nature* of Christ, after he hath *surrender'd* up its mediatorial Dominion, shall still remain as highly exalted in *Honour*, *Dignity* and *Beatitude* as ever; and Angels and Saints shall for ever render to it the same religious *Respect* and *Veneration*, as they did before he surrendered it; for it shall still remain hypostatically united to his Godhead, and so God shall for ever reign *in it*, tho' it shall not for ever reign *with God*: So that it being still the *Temple* of the Deity, and all the *glorious* Atchievements it made during its *Humiliation* and *mediatorial* Reign, *reflecting* still the *same Honour* and *Praise*, and *Glory* upon it, it will to Eternity be as *great* and *glorious* throughout all the heavenly World, as ever it was in the *full Splendor* of its Kingdom; so that in this respect what the ancient Fathers added to the *Nicene* Creed is most true, *his Kingdom shall have no end*, because, without possessing it, he shall for ever enjoy the Glory and Honour, and Beatitude of it.

V. And *lastly*, That the Son being thus *subjected* to the Father, all Power and Dominion shall from thenceforth be immediately exercised by the Deity; that is to say, by God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; for so *ver.* 28. *Then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that did put all Things under him, that God may be all in all.* Where the Variation of the Person is very observable; for it is not said, that the Son shall be subject to him that did put all Things under him (*i. e.* the Father) that *he* may be all in all, but that *God* may be all in all; that is, the *Tri-une* God-head subsisting in three Persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; for had he meant the *Father* only, he ought, according to the common Rules of Speech, to have said *he*, or *the Father*, of whom he had been before speaking, instead of *God*; nor can it be reasonably supposed, that after the Resignation of the mediatorial Kingdom, the *Father only* shall act and reign, and the *Son* and *Holy Ghost sit still* for ever and do *nothing*; but the Meaning is, that this mediatorial Kingdom ceasing, in which the Son as *Man* as well as *God* now reigns, there shall from thenceforth be no *other Kingdom* or *Dominion* exercised in that celestial State, but what is *Essential* to the *Godhead*, in which the Son and Holy Ghost *subsisting together* with the Father, shall for ever *reign together* with him: for this I take to be the Meaning of that Phrase, *that God may be all in all*; that is, that he may rule and govern all Things *immediately* by *himself*, that his *immediate* Will may reign alone in all, and be the *proximate* Guide of all that blessed World, that there may be no *mediate* or *mediatorial Governor* between him and us to exact our Obedience, and convey to us his Favours and Rewards, but that we may render all our Duty immediately *to him*, and derive all our Happiness immediately *from him*; so that as now Christ the *Theanthropos*, or *God-man, is all in all*, Col. iii. 11. because the Father doth all Things, and governs all Things by him, having *given him all Power in Heaven and Earth*; so when this Oeconomy ceases, God alone, or the *Tri-une* God-head shall be *all in all*, because he shall do all Things, and govern all Things by *himself immediately*. Thus, when *the Son of Man* is subjected to him that did put all

Things under him, that one divine Eſſence, whence all Things did proceed, and in which the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt ſubſiſt, ſhall, from thenceforth, reſume all Rule and Dominion to itſelf, and only *the Son of God*, together with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt ſhall reign. But yet in this purely divine Government, there is no doubt but thoſe divine Perſons will ſtill continue to act in *Subordination* to each other, according to that natural *Subordination* in which they are placed by their *perſonal Properties*: For the Godhead being communicated *from* the *Father* to the *Son*, the Father, in the Order of Nature, muſt neceſſarily be *Prior* to the *Son*, and the ſame *Godhead* being communicated to the Holy Ghoſt *from the Father* and the *Son*, both Father and Son muſt alſo, in Order of Nature, be *prior* to the *Holy Ghoſt*: So that between theſe ſacred Three, there is an *internal neceſſary Subordination*, that can never be altered or inverted; and therefore there is no doubt, but that as they will always be *ſubordinate*, ſo they will always *act ſubordinately*. The *Father* as the firſt, the *Begetter* and the Fountain of Divinity will be always *firſt* and *ſupreme* in the divine Monarchy; the *Son*, as *begotten* by him, will ſtill reign in *Subordination to him*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, as *proceeding* from both, will continue to reign in *Subordination* to both. Thus to everlaſting Ages only the Trinity in Unity ſhall reign, and by its own immediate Will and Influence, rule and bleſs all that heavenly World, over which it ſpreads its Almighty Wings, and ſo it ſhall be *all in all.*

SECT. XIII.

Of the Reaſon and Wiſdom of this Method of God's governing ſinful Men by his own Eternal Son in our Nature.

THough we are not either by our natural *Reaſon* or *Revelation*, to fathom the Depth of the *divine Wiſdom*, or to trace out all the Reaſon of its Methods and Conduct, yet upon diligent Inquiry, we can plainly diſcern the Tracts of an *admirable Wiſdom* in all the ſtated Methods of Providence; and though we cannot ſay, that this or that is the *main* or *only Reaſon* why God doth ſo or ſo, (for infinite Wiſdom may have infinitely *greater* and infinitely *more Reaſons* of its Actions than our ſhort-ſighted Reaſon can at preſent diſcover) yet by *comparing one* Action of his with another, and diligently obſerving the *Drift* and *Tendency* of them all, how they concur to one common End, and ſubſerve each other to promote and accompliſh it, we cannot avoid diſcovering Reaſon enough in them to convince and ſatisfy us, that they all proceed from a *moſt wiſe* and *intelligent Agent*; and this more eſpecially in the admirable Oeconomy of the *Mediation, viz.* the eternal Son of God's aſſuming our Nature, and therein becoming our *Prophet*, *Prieſt*, and *King*: For what Reaſons there are why he ſhould aſſume our Nature therein to be our *Prophet* and our *Prieſt*, hath been ſhewn before. And now we ſhall proceed ſo far as our ſhort Inquiries will reach, to ſhew what admirable Reaſon there is why he ſhould be our *King* alſo, to rule and govern us in the *ſame* aſſumed Nature, wherein he is our *Prophet* and our *Prieſt*; of which, according to the beſt Light that Revelation affords us, there are theſe five Reaſons aſſignable.

Firſt, That he might govern us in a Way more *accommodated* to this degenerate State of our *Natures*.

Secondly, That he might the more effectually *cure* and *prevent* the ſpreading Contagion of *Idolatry*.

Thirdly, That he might the more powerfully *encourage our Obedience*.

Fourthly, That he might *oblige* us to himſelf with a ſtronger Tie of *Gratitude* and *Ingenuity*.

Fifthly, That he might give us the more ample *Aſſurance* of our future *Reward*,

I. God governs us by his own eternal Son in *our Natures* the better to *accommodate* his Government to this our degenerate *State*, which renders us extremely

extremely unfit to be governed *immediately* by God. It is true, whilst Man continued in his Primitive *Innocence* and *Perfection*, he was in a Condition fit to *converse* with God Face to Face, and to live under his *immediate* Dominion; for then his *Sense* being under the Conduct of his *Reason*, and all his *brutal Affections* intirely subjected to the Government and Directions of his *superior Faculties*, he was as much ruled and influenced by the Objects of his *Reason*, as he is now by those of his *Sense*, and was as powerfully moved and affected by what he only *knew* and *believed*, as he is now by what he *sees* and *feels*; so that then God, that great invisible Spirit, who is removed from all the Perceptions of *bodily Sense*, and is only perceivable by our *Reason* and *Faith*, did as powerfully impress Man's Hopes and Fears, and all the other Principles of Action in him as he could have done, had he appeared as amiable and dreadful to the Man's *Sight* and *Feeling*, as he then did to his *Faith* and *Reason*. In *this State* and *Condition* therefore Man was duly qualified to be governed *immediately* by God, to receive his Impressions, and to be moved and acted by the over-ruling Influence of his immense Perfections. But when once he had *degenerated* from this *pure* and *blessed State* of his Nature, and had thrown off the Government of his *Reason*, and subjected himself to the tyrannick Sway of his *brutal Appetites*, he thereby unqualified himself to live under God's *immediate* Dominion: For now he being govern'd by his sensual *Appetites*, and they by the sensual *Objects* that surround him, scarce any thing else can strike upon his Hopes and Fears, but what is *carnal* and *sensual*; or if any thing else doth, to be sure some carnal Object immediately *interposes* and breaks the Stroke, and renders it faint and ineffectual; so that now *God*, who is solely the Object of our *Faith* and *Reason*, can scarce be admitted to speak with our *Hopes* and *Fears*, by which we are made to be governed; or if he be, his *soft still Voice* is immediately drowned in the perpetual Clamour which these *sensitive Goods* and *Evils* raise about us. Wherefore, having thus unqualified ourselves by our *Apostasy* from the *primitive State* of our Naure, to live under the *immediate* Wing and Government of God, and he being resolved in tender *Commiseration* to us, not to abondon us for ever, did, in his infinite Wisdom, project a *new Method* of governing us more *accommodated* to this our degenerate *State, viz.* by uniting *himself* to sensible *Matter*, and therein addressing to our *bodily Senses* in audible Voices, visible Appearances, and finally in our own *Form* and *Nature*, which, of all other sensible Things, we are most apt to be affected with, to love, and honour, and reverence, and obey: For so immediately after his Fall, God appeared to *Adam*, probably in a glorious *human Form*, and spake to him in an audible Voice, and afterwards he did the same to the Patriarchs, and to the whole Nation of the *Jews* from Mount *Sinai*, among whom he also dwelt in a *visible Glory*; by which Means he acquired to himself the same Advantage of governing those sensual Men that sensible Objects had, which, by striking on their bodily Sense, did more powerfully insinuate themselves into their Wills and Affections. But all these *sensible Appearances* of God, were only as so many *præludia*, to his assuming our *Nature* into personal Union with his *Godhead*, and therein exhibiting himself familiarly to the bodily *Senses* of Mankind, which, though he now ceases to do, as being exalted far above our Sight, on the right hand of God the Father, there to reign, till the Consummation of all Things, yet seeing we believe he is there visible in himself, cloathed in a most *glorious human Form*, we can by *Imagination* supply the Want of our *Sight* of him, and reach him by our *inward* Sense, though we cannot come at him by our *outward*; and whereas, were he a mere *Spirit*, we could have *no Imagination* of him, because *Imaginations* are nothing but the *Images* of *sensible Things*, we can now by the Strength of our *Imagination* fetch him down from the Heavens when we please, and set him before our *Minds* in all that venerable *Majesty*, wherein he sits at the right Hand of his Father. So that though he be never present to our *outward* Sense, yet, which is almost equivalent, when ever we have occasion to converse with him, we can make him present to our *inward, viz.* our *Fansy* and

and *Imagination*; into this spacious Gallery of the Pictures of sensible Things, our *Mind* can walk when it pleases, and there behold him in Effigy, though it cannot see him Face to Face; and considering how much we are governed in this degenerate *State* of our *Nature* by *Fansy* and *Imagination*, as well as by *Sight* and *Feeling*, it is doubtless a most advantageous *Circumstance* of God's Government of the World, that he governs us by one whom we can *fancy* and *imagine*, when we cannot *see* or *feel* him. There are a great many Men that never *saw* the *King*, who yet are over-awed by the *Imagination* they have of his *Majesty* and *Greatness*; whereas were not the King a *Man*, but a pure invisible *Spirit*, they could form no *Imagination* of him, the want of which would very much *abate*, if not utterly *extinguish*, the *Awe* and *Reverence* of his *Person*.

Considering therefore how much we are governed by our *Sense* in this State of our Apostacy, it was doubtless a wonderful wise Contrivance of God, who is a pure *Spirit*, to assume to himself some *sensible* Matter, that therein by presenting himself to our *outward* or *inward* Sense, he might strike the deeper Awe on us, and thereby the more effectually rule and govern us. But of all *sensible* Matter, none could be so proper to this Purpose as a *human Form*, in which we are inured and accustomed to be governed, and of which, as was hinted before, we have, of all *sensible* Things, the greatest *Love* and *Veneration*, during this our Degeneracy; therefore by which we are so unqualified to be governed by God *immediately*, God the Father hath most wisely contrived to govern us by *God-man*, *i. e.* by his own eternal Son, *hypostatically* united to our *Natures*. But when once Mankind is *recovered* out of his lapsed Condition, when our *Sense* is perfectly *subdued* to our *Reason*, and all our *Faculties* are *reduced* into their *Primitive* Order, then we shall return under God's *immediate* Dominion, for then God-man shall *deliver up the Kingdom, and God shall be all in all.*

II. God now governs us by his own eternal *Son* in our Natures, to cure and prevent the spreading Contagion of *Idolatry*. There is no one Vice to which our corrupt Nature is more *propense*, and of which it hath been more *universally* tardy, than that of *Idolatry*; for as for *other Vices*, they have their peculiar Provinces, and such a *Vice* is more predominant in such a *Clime* and *Temperament* of Air: In one Nation *Pride* reigns, in another *Intemperance*, in another *Treachery*, and in a fourth *Malice* and *Revenge*; but as for *Idolatry*, it is an *universal* Monarch, to whose Empire all the *World* hath been enslaved and subjected, and notwithstanding all the Care which God hath taken to prevent it, it hath spread like the Plague, till it became the *Epidemical* Disease of *human Nature*. Now to be sure such an *universal Effect* must necessarily be owing to some *universal Cause*; and what other can that be than the *universal Degeneracy* of human Nature from its primitive Life of Reason into a Life of Sense? For while Man was under the Government of his *Reason*, he was as much influenced by dry *Arguments*, as he is now by his *Sense*, and the full Reason he had to *believe* that there is an *invisible Divine* Being presiding over all Things, did as vigorously *excite* him to adore and worship him as the *Sight* of him could have done, had he appeared to his bodily Eyes in a Glory proportionable to the immense Perfections of his Nature. But when once his *Sense* had usurped the Throne of his *Reason*, and enslaved him to its Empire, the Case was quite altered, now *Reason* and *Argument* have very little Influence on him, unless it be back'd with some Impressions of his *Sense*, and his predominant *Affections* are those that are raised by the Strokes of *sensible* Objects upon the Sensories of his Sight, and Taste, and Feeling, which the Divine Substance and Perfections can never touch, they being purely *spiritual*; by which Means that *Communication* and *Intercourse* which was between God and Man, whilst Man was governed by Reason, is mightily *distributed* and *interrupted*, though it be not altogether *stopp'd* and *intercepted*; for still our Reason (which was not *extinguished* by the Degeneracy of our Natures) suggests to us, that there is a God, and inspires us with an awful Sense of his Divine Perfections, which still maintains in us *religious* Inclinations and Affections, whereby we are importuned and solicited

licited to adore and worſhip; but we being under the Government of *Senſe*, are thereby naturally inclined either to look upon God, who is in himſelf a pure *inviſible Spirit*, under the Notion of a *ſenſible* Being, and as ſuch to worſhip him, (for ſo anciently ſome adored the Sun for God, others the univerſal material Nature, others ſuch and ſuch particular Parts of it) and in this conſiſts that *groſs Idolatry* of worſhipping *falſe* Gods, or at leaſt to blend our Conceptions of him with *corporeal Phantaſms*; and then to expreſs thoſe Phantaſms in outward viſible Images, by them to excite and direct our Worſhip to him (for ſo in moſt Nations the ſupreme *Numen* was heretofore adored in Statues and Images of ſeveral Shapes and Figures copied from the ſeveral Images, by which they repreſented him to themſelves in their own *vain* and *roving Imaginations)* and herein conſiſts that more *refined Idolatry* of worſhipping the *true God* in a *falſe manner.* Thus the *general Cauſe* of all Idolatry is nothing but the *general Apoſtacy* of human Nature from the Life of *Reaſon* to the Life of *Senſe*, by which we are naturally inclined either to transform God into a *groſs* and *ſenſible Nature*, or at leaſt to aſſiſt ourſelves in conceiving of and adoring and worſhipping him by ſenſible and viſible Objects. To prevent which, God hath been graciouſly pleas'd to aſſume ſome *material Subſtance*, and therein from time to time to exhibit to Mens Eyes a *viſible* Preſence of himſelf, which in Scripture is frequently called *Glory of the Lord*, and by the ancient *Jews* the *Shechinah* or Habitation of God, and conſiſted of a *ſhining luminous* Matter, which exhibited a glorious Luſtre of Flame or Light ſet off with thick and ſolemn Clouds; whence it is probable he is ſaid, to *cover himſelf with Light as with a Garment*, Pſal. civ. 2. and in this *glorious Appearance* he conducted *Iſrael* through the *Red Sea* and Wilderneſs, came down upon Mount *Sinai*, and was ſeen by *Moſes* and the Elders of *Iſrael*; and from thence removed into the Tabernacle, where he fixed his Abode between the Cherubims, and from whence he frequently diſplay'd himſelf before the whole Congregation in the Beams of that *viſible Glory* which he there aſſumed, as the *Symbol* of his *ſpecial Preſence*; and by thus doing he took a moſt wiſe and effectual Courſe, not only to *raiſe* and *excite* their Devotion, but alſo to *reſtrain* and *confine* it within its proper Bounds and Limits; for while Men are under the Government of *Senſe*, there is nothing hath that Prevalence with them to excite their Affections, and fix their Thoughts as *material* Phantaſms; ſo that God, by exhibiting to them a *viſible Preſence* of himſelf, and thereby impreſſing their Imaginations with a *material* Phantaſm of his Preſence and Glory, did at once both ſpur their *Affections*, and bridle their *Fancies* from roving into wild Similitudes of him, and thereby take an effectual Courſe to prevent the worſhipping him by thoſe *outward Images* which they exemplified from the Similitudes which they framed of him in their own *Fancies*; and having this *viſible* Glory to entertain their *Fancies*, they had the *leſs Temptation* from their *Senſe* to hunt after *ſenſible* Similitudes and Repreſentations of him, that outward *Shechinah*, which they ſometimes ſaw, being a *ſufficient Help* to raiſe up their groveling *Minds* and carnal *Affections* to the Contemplation and Worſhip of his *inviſible Glory*; and that *that* outward *viſible Glory*, in which he appeared to them, was intended for this Purpoſe, ſeems plainly imply'd in *Deut.* iv. 12. where *Moſes* tells them, that *when God ſpake to them out of the midſt of the Fire, they heard the Voice of the Words, but ſaw no Similitude*; and ſo again, *ver.* 15. from whence he infers, *Take ye therefore good heed unto yourſelves, leſt ye corrupt yourſelves, and make ye a graven Image, the Similitude of any Figure, the Likeneſs of Male or Female*, &c. *ver.* 16, 17. where by *their ſeeing no Similitude*, is not meant that they ſaw *nothing*; for God himſelf had promiſed *Moſes*, that *the third Day he would come down in the Sight of all the People on Mount Sinai*, Exod. xix. 11. and therefore in all probability they ſaw the *Fire* or *viſible Glory*, in which he deſcended; for it is expreſſly ſaid they *ſaw* it afterwards, *Exod.* xxiv. 17. but this Fire ſhining without any *determinate Form* or *Shape*, they might very well be ſaid to *ſee no Similitude*; for by *Similitude* it is evident he means a *determinate Shape*, *ver.* 16. where he bids them beware of *making the Simi-*

Similitude of any Figure; so that the People saw God only in an unfigured Flame, or *visible* Glory, that was cast into no *determinate Shape* (though within that it is probable, as was shewn before, God appeared to *Moses* and the seventy Elders in a glorious *human Shape.)* And this it seems God deemed a *sufficient* Help to enable them to *fix* their *Thoughts* on, and *determine* their *Worship* to *himself*; and therefore he strictly charges them to content themselves with this, and not let their Fancies rove, as they were too prone to do, after formed *Similitudes* and *Images* of him, lest those *Images* should create in their Minds false and opprobrious *Notions* of him, and cause them to imagine the immense *Godhead*, as the Heathen did, *to be like unto Gold and Silver, or Stone ingraven by Art, and Man's Device*, Acts xvii. 29. Thus Men being degenerated into a Life of *Sense*, and thereby render'd extremely propense to *Idolatry*, to worship God by *Images*, and thereupon to form blasphemous *Notions* of him, as if he were such a one in himself as those Images represented him, God was pleased to exhibit to them a *sensible Presence* of himself, that thereby he might the more effectually *excite* their *Awe* and *Reverence*, and at the same time *restrain* their *Imaginations* from debauching their Minds with unbecoming Similitudes of his infinite Being and Perfections.

And for the same Reason that God, under the Old Law, appeared to the *Jews* in a *visible Glory*, he afterwards appeared to this *lower* World, and doth still continue to appear to the *upper*, personally united to a *human Body* and *Soul*; for so St. *John* represents Christ's assuming of *human Nature* (who, before he assum'd it, was that God who appear'd to the *Jews* from their Tabernacle in that *Shechinah* of visible Glory) to be only a *removing* out of one Tabernacle into another, out of the Tabernacle of the *Law* into the Tabernacle of *human Nature*, John i. 14. *The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth*; where instead of *he dwelt among us*, in the *Greek* it is ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, *i. e.* he *tabernacled*, or dwelt as in the Tabernacle *among us*, he removed his Abode out of the *old Tabernacle*, and took a new Habitation in *human Nature*; for that this is the Apostle's Meaning is evident from what follows, *and we beheld his Glory*, which plainly refers to that glorious Light or flaming *Substance*, called *the Glory of the Lord*, in which of old he was wont to display himself before the Congregation of *Israel* from between the Cherubims. And in this very Glory St. *John* says he beheld him, *viz.* at his Baptism and Transfiguration, at both which Times he was seen by them *shining* in the very same *Glory*, wherein of old he was wont to shine out of the *Old Tabernacle*; and therefore it is added, that this Glory wherein St. *John* beheld him, was *the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father*, i. e. it was the very same Glory with that wherein the only begotten was heretofore wont to display himself from the Tabernacle of *Moses*; so that the Meaning of the Words seems at least to be this, He dwelt among us in *our Nature*, just as heretofore he did in the Mosaick *Tabernacle*, and in *this Tabernacle* of our Nature we *twice* beheld him shining forth with the same Glory, wherein he was wont to shine out of that *Old Tabernacle*, from between the Cherubims. Since therefore Christ dwelt in our Nature in the same *manner*, and therein appear'd in the same visible *Glory*, that he formerly did in the *Old Tabernacle*, there is no doubt, but he did it for the same Ends and Purposes; and therefore since *one* of the *Ends* of his dwelling in that *Tabernacle* was to restrain Men from running into *Idolatry*, there is no doubt, but among others he intended *this End* also in assuming our *Natures*, than which there can be no *visible* Appearance in Nature more *proper* to *excite* our sluggish, and to *determine* our roving Devotions upon him: For since in this Life of *Sense* which we now lead, we need a *sensible* Presence of God to raise up our Minds and Affections to him, in what Presence could he have appear'd to us more *proper* for this End than that of our own *Nature?* a Presence which is not *confused* like that of the Old Tabernacle, which was only a Mixture of shapeless Lights and Shadows; but *distinct* and *determinate*, and of our own *Form* and *Shape*, which, of all others, is

most

most familiar to, and most beloved and reverenced by us, and consequently of all others is most *apt* to encourage our *Prayers*, and enflame our *Zeal*, and raise our *Admiration*. For in what *sensible* Appearance could God have more powerfully affected our *Sense*, than in that which we are most inclined to *love*, most prone to trust to, and most accustomed to *reverence* and *obey*; and than that in which alone we discern the *Image* of *God*, and the *Reflections* of those divine *Attributes* of Wisdom and Goodness, and Truth and Justice, for which we reverence and adore him? There being therefore no *visible Substance* in which God could more advantagiously exhibit himself to us, in order to the *exciting* our Worship to him, and *determining* it upon him than that of a *humane Form*, he thought meet to assume our Natures into a *personal* Union with his Divinity, and therein to rule and govern us. So that now the *Humanity* of our Saviour, is the *Tabernacle* and *Shechinah* of God; wherein the *Fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily*, and these *two Natures* united in *Person* and *Glory*, are the immediate Object of our Worship; wherefore as the ancient *Jews fell upon their Faces*, and worshipped when they beheld the *Shechinah* or *Glory of the Lord*, their Imagination being thereby *assisted*, and their Affections *excited*, Lev. ix. 24. So when we by our *internal* Sense or *Imagination* look up to the glorified *Humanity* of our Saviour in Heaven, it is our Duty to raise up our Affections to Heaven, by that *sensible Shechinah* of God, and thereupon to fall down and Worship. But as the *Jews*, when they fell down before their *Shechinah*, did not worship the *visible Light* or *Glory* separately from *God*, but as it was *united* to and *assumed* into Conjunction with him, so neither ought we to worship our *Shechinah*, viz. the *Humanity* of our *Saviour*, separately from his *Divinity*, but in *Union* and *Conjunction* with it; and in short, as it was utterly unlawful for the *Jews* to worship God in any other *Shechinah* or *sensible Appearance*, either unshapen or shaped, than in that glorious One which he himself vouchsafed to them, that being *sufficient* to affect their *Sense*, and thereby to raise up their *Minds* and *Affections* to him, so is it utterly unlawful for us Christians to worship God in any other *Shechinah*, *Image*, *Similitude*, or *visible Appearance*, than that of the glorified *Humanity* of our Saviour, that being *sufficient* to assist our *Imaginations*, and elevate our *Hearts* and *Devotions* to him. For though we cannot behold his *glorified Humanity* with our *bodily* Eyes, now he is removed into *Heaven*, yet so neither did the *Jews the Glory of the Lord* (at least but very rarely) after the Ark, whereupon it sat, was removed into the *Holy* of *Holies*, which was a Figure of *Heaven*, yet as they being assured, it was there, could easily view it in their *Imaginations*, and thereby assist their *Devotion*; so we being assured from Scripture, that Christ's *Humanity* is in *Heaven*, can look up thither in our *Imagination*, and by beholding its Glory *there*, lift up our heavy Minds and Affections to the eternal *Divinity* that inhabits it; so that if we Christians make any other *Shechinah* or *Image* to worship God in, besides his own *Humanity*, which he himself made, and wherein he now dwells above in the Heavens, we are of all false Worshippers the most *inexcusable*; because by assuming our *Humanity*, God hath vouchsafed to us such an Image and *Shechinah* of himself, as is of all others the most *proper* and *effectual* to excite and determine our Devotions.

III. God hath chosen to govern us by his own eternal Son in *our Natures*, that he might thereby the more powerfully encourage us to *Obedience*, for now we have all the Assurance in the World, that the great Design of his Government is to do *us good*, and to advance *our Happiness*, and that under his blessed Empire, we shall be sure to enjoy all the *Graces* and *Favours* that can be wisely indulged on *his Part*, or modestly expected on *ours*. Had he governed us *immediately* by himself, we could not have been so *secure* of our Interest in him, as we have Reason to be of our Interest in his Son *hypostatically* united to our *Nature*; because the *divine* Nature, considered purely as such, is infinitely *distant* from *ours*, and has no other relation to it, than as it is the *common Cause* of all Things; and being so *distant* in Nature from us, it would have been hard for us to imagine how he could be touched with the same *tender* and *compassionate*

Regard for us as he would be, if he were nearer allied to us; especially when we reflected upon our own Demerit, and considered that by our *Sins* we had set ourselves at a *wider Distance* from him, than we were by our *Natures*; this together with that *Anxiety*, which naturally arises in *guilty* Minds, could not but have rendred us very *suspicious* of God's Intentions towards us, had he governed us immediately by *himself*; but now that he governs us by his own *Son* cloathed in *our* own *Nature*, at his Hands we may with full *Confidence* expect a most gracious and merciful Treatment. For now we are assured, we have a *close* and most *intimate* Interest in him, by reason of his *Kindred* and *Alliance* to us in the same *common Nature*, which makes him every Man's another self under different Accidents and Circumstances; and his Nature being perfectly *happy*, and perfectly *pure* from all irregular Passions and Appetites, cannot but be affected with a most *tender* Regard to all the Individuals of its *own kind*; because being *compleatly happy* himself, he can have nothing *farther* to desire for himself, but that his *kindred*, by Nature, who are all his own Substance, dilated and multiplied, may be *happy too*; and being *intirely good*, he can have nothing of that sordid *Selfishness* in him which doth too often *contract* and *narrow* our Benevolence, and cause us like *Serpents* to infold ourselves within ourselves, and to turn out our Stings to all the World besides: Upon both these Accounts therefore as he is a *perfectly happy* and *perfectly good Man*, he cannot but bear a hearty and universal *good* Will to *Mankind*; and that he doth so, he hath given us too many dear *Experiments* to make the least doubt of it; for while he was among us, he all along prefer'd our *Interest* before his *own*, he made himself *poor* to *inrich* us, exposed himself to *Contempt* to raise us to *Glory*, took upon him our *Guilt* to release us from *Punishment*, and willingly *underwent* a most miserable *Death*, that we might *live* happily for ever. In all which he gave us the most glorious Demonstrations, how infinitely *dear* the *humane Nature*, of which he participated, was to him in all those numberless Individuals into which it hath been multiplied. The Consideration of which is exceedingly pregnant with Encouragements to *Obedience*: For seeing God governs us by one who is as well our *Brother* by *Nature*, as our *King* by *Office*, seeing he carries our *kind* in his own *Person*, and is Flesh of our Flesh, and Bone of our Bone, we may certainly depend upon it, that he will be as kind and as gracious to us as his *Government* and our *Happiness*, which is involved in it, will permit him; that so long as we are *sincere* to him he will *compassionate* our Weakness, and that when we have gone astray from him, he will graciously receive us upon our humble *Submissions*, that he will not load us beyond our *Strength*, nor punish us beyond our *demerit*, but that he will readily *assist* us in all our Needs, and tenderly *pity* us in all our pitiable Cases, and kindly *accept* of our honest Endeavours, and *reward* them beyond all our Hopes and Expectations; in short, that nothing shall be able to separate us from his Favour, but only our own *Obstinacy* and wilful *Rebellion*; and that though in this Case he will be *angry* with us; yet he will *wait* to be *gracious* again in Expectation of our *Repentance*, and not *hastily* abandon us to *everlasting* Ruin, till we have sinned ourselves past *all hope* of Recovery. For as to all these Things the *humane Nature* in him is our constant *Advocate*, which being *our* Nature as well as *his*, makes *our* Case its *own*, and is as much concerned for *us*, as it could reasonably be for *itself*, if it were in our Circumstances; than which, what higher Encouragement to *Loyalty* and *Obedience*, can there be given to ingenuous Minds, to consider that he who *reigns* above in the Heavens, and hath the Disposal of my Fate, is my Kinsman by *Nature*, who by assuming my *Substance*, hath assumed my *Interest*; so that whatsoever he doth for *me*, he doth it for *himself*, that is, for his own *humane Nature* that is in *me*, and that therefore 'tis impossible, but he must continue *kind* to *me*, whilst I continue *dutiful* to *him*, seeing that without great Provocation he can never be *unkind* sure to his *own Nature*. For this Reason therefore God governs us by his Son in our *own Nature*, that so by this his near *kindred* to us, he might the better *assure* our diffident Mind

of a most gracious and merciful Treatment at his Hands, and thereby excite us to a *free* and *chearful Obedience* to him.

IV. God governs us by his own eternal Son in *our Nature*, that so he might the more powerfully excite our *Gratitude* and *Ingenuity*, and thereby oblige us to render him a more *free* and *generous Obedience*, which is the Obedience he *delights* in, and that alone which answers the *End* of his Government; for that which he aims at in governing us, is to subdue the *Rebellions* of our *Natures* against the eternal Laws of right *Reason*, that thereby he may render us more and more *rational*, and consequently more and more prepared to participate of the *Happiness* of a *rational* Nature, which is never to be effected by a *forced* and *constrained* Obedience; for so long as our Obedience is *forced*, our Wills and Affections are *unsubdued*, and all our outward Submissions, are only the Disguise of a *treacherous* and *rebellious Nature*; we *would still* fly out into Acts of Rebellion, but we *dare* not; our Inclinations are as *stiff* and *obstinate* as ever, and the Restraint which our *Fear* lays upon them, is so far from *conquering* them, that it only *heightens* and *inrages* them. Till therefore our Obedience becomes *generous* and *free*, and doth proceed from a *willing* Mind, from a Mind that is influenced by *ingenuous* Motives, it will signify little or nothing to the *Amendment* of our Nature; which notwithstanding its beautiful rinde and outside, will still remain corrupt and rotten at the Core. Now to render us freely and willingly obedient, what more *effectual* Method could God have taken than this, of governing us by his own *Son* in *our Nature?* For in this our Nature he was our *Priest*; and as I shewed before, it was infinitely *reasonable* he should be so; and by what more *endearing Motive* can we be obliged to obey him than this, that now he is in Heaven, he rules and governs us in that *very Nature* which he sacrificed for *us*, when he was upon Earth; and that it is in that *individual Humanity* which as our *Priest* he offer'd up for us on the Cross, that he now reigns over us, at the Right Hand of God; so that he who is now our *King* was once our *Sacrifice*, and that not by *constraint*, but by his own *free* Offer and Consent? For to redeem the Lives of our *Souls*, which by a thousand Guilts were forfeited to the Vengeance of God, he freely chose to assume our *Nature*, and therein to undergo our *Punishment*, that so we might escape and be happy for ever; and being governed, as we are, by a *King* that *died* for us, that willingly *died* a woful shameful Death, to ransom *our Lives* from Death eternal, what *Monsters* of *Ingratitude* must we be, if we still *persist* in our Rebellions against him! When I consider that he who exacts my *Obedience*, hath spent his *own Heart's Blood for me*, that he who requires me to sacrifice my *Lusts* to him, did chearfully sacrifice his *own Life* for *me*; how can I *grudge* to comply with his Demands, without Blushing and Confusion? O *ungrateful!* had he been as *backward* to die for *thee*, as thou art to *submit* to *him*, thou hadst been a *Wretch*, a *miserable desperate Wretch* for ever. With what Face then canst thou pretend to any thing that *is modest* or *ingenuous*, *tender* or *apprehensive* in *humane Nature*, that thinkest it *much* to render him those *Duties*, which he demands of thee, and which he demands for no other Reason, but because they are necessary to *thy Happiness*, when thou knowest he never thought it much to pour out his Soul for thee in the bitterest *Agonies* and *Torments*, that ever humane Nature endured? If therefore it be possible to work up our degenerate Natures into a *free* and *chearful* Obedience to God, one would think this *Consideration* should do it, that he whom God hath constituted our *King* to demand our *Obedience*, demands it in our *own Nature*, which he assumed that he might *die* for us, and thereby release us from that dreadful Obligation we were under to have *died for ever*. So that now while his *Authority* bespeaks our *Awe* and *Reverence*, his *Blood* bespeaks our *Gratitude* and *Ingenuity*, and that in such Language, and with such powerful Rhetorick and Persuasion as is impossible for us to resist, unless we are resolved to outvy the Devils themselves in *Ingratitude*, who though they have been audacious enough to outface the *Authority* of their Maker, were never so much Devils yet as to turn a deaf Ear to the *vocal Blood* and *Wounds* of a *Redeemer*.

 V. And

V. And *lastly*, God governs us by his own eternal Son in our *own Natures*, that thereby he may give us the more ample *Assurance* of our future *Reward*. Had he continued to govern us by himself *immediately*, we had wanted *one* of the most *encouraging Instances* of his immense Bounty in *rewarding* Obedience, that ever was given to the World; and that is his Advancement of our Saviour to that *mediatorial* Royalty, which he now exercises at the right Hand of the Majesty on high; for had our Saviour been God *only*, *he* had been incapable of *Reward*, his *Happiness*, as *such*, being so immense, as that it can admit of no *Addition*; but being *Man* as well as *God*, he is thereby *capacitated* for all that *vast Reward*, which the Possession of his *mediatorial* Kingdom, together with an everlasting Heaven, includes; and all this *Reward* is the Product of that *perfect* and *profound Obedience*, which he rendered to his Father whilst he was in this World. So that now in *him* by whom God hath promised to *reward* our Obedience, we have an *illustrious Instance* of God's Liberality in *rewarding* Obedience; by *his* happy Fate, we may be fully assured, that we shall not serve God for *nought*, but that the *Reward* of our Obedience shall ten thousand-fold exceed the *Labour* and *Difficulty* of it; for *he* is a *Man* as well as *we*, though he be *hypostatically* united to *God*; and this *Man* for some few Years faithful *Service* upon Earth, for revealing *God's Will* to Men, and exhibiting a perfect *Example* of *Obedience* to it, for exposing himself to some temporal *Calamities*, and finally, for offering up himself a *spotless Victim* for the Sins of the World, is now advanced to the utmost heighth of *Bliss* and *Glory*, that it is possible for a Creature to arrive to; he is set *far above all Principality and Power*, he is *served* and *adored*, as the only Potentate under God the Father, throughout all the heavenly World; he is *worshipp'd* and *celebrated* by Cherubim and Seraphim, by Arch-angels and Angels, he is *extoll'd* in the Songs of the Patriarchs and Prophets, the Apostles and Evangelists, the Confessors and Martyrs; and his Name is *resounded* with everlasting *Praises* and *Thanksgivings*, throughout all the vast Choir of the Spirits of just Men made perfect; and in a Word, he hath *all Power given him both in Heaven and Earth*, and to his all-commanding Will the whole *Creation* is *subjected*. In this ever blessed *King*, therefore, by whom God now rules us, we have for the *Assurance* of our hope of a future *Reward*, the most *stupendous Instance* of it, that ever was given to the World. And indeed, since the great *End* of Christ's *Mediation* was to reduce Men to their Duty, by giving them a *sure* and *certain Hope* of the *Remission* of their Sins at present, and of a glorious *Reward* hereafter, it was highly convenient that *itself* should be an Example of its own *Design*, and that the *glorious* Part of it should be made the Reward of the more *painful* and *difficult*; that so having in the *Mediation* itself, a signal Instance of God's immense Liberality in *rewarding* Obedience, we might thereupon the more *confidently* expect that glorious Recompence of *Reward* which God hath promised to those that obey him, and be thereby the more vigorously *excited* to our Duty. And hence our Saviour proposes himself to us as an *Instance* of the Reward of Obedience, *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my Throne, even as I have overcome, and am sat down with my Father on his Throne:* As much as if he should have said, that upon *your overcoming* the Difficulties of *your Duty*, you shall receive a most glorious Reward, you need not at all doubt, having so illustrious an Example of it in my *self*, who having conquer'd the *difficult* Parts of my *Mediation*, which was to teach you as a *Prophet*, and to expiate for you as a *Priest*, am now crowned with the Reward of transacting the *glorious* Part of it; *i. e. Sitting with my Father on his Throne*, and there reigning with him in unspeakable Glory and Beatitude; and accordingly the Apostle bids us, *Look unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despised the Shame, and is sat down on the right hand of the Throne of the Majesty on high*, Heb. xii. 2.

SECT.

SECT. XIV.

That Jesus Christ is this Mediator, of whom we have been treating.

HAVING in the foregoing Sections explain'd at large the *Nature* and *Offices* of the *Mediator* between God and Men; all that now remains, is to prove, that Jesus Christ, the Author of our Religion, is the *Person* whom God hath ordained and constituted this *Mediator* between him and us. And that he is so, he *himself* openly averr'd, whilst he was upon Earth, and afterwards proclaim'd it to the World by the Mouth of his *Apostles*; but this *singly* by itself is no Argument at all of the Truth of the Thing, because a *Deceiver* might have averr'd the same Thing; and since there were sundry *Pretenders* to this Office as well as *he*, it was necessary there should be some *other Evidence* of his being invested with it, besides his pretending to it; otherwise it would have been impossible for us to *distinguish* him from those that falsly pretended to it; and accordingly he himself tells us, *John* v. 31. *If I bear Witness of myself, my Witness is not true*, i. e. If I can produce no other Testimony of my being the Mediator than my own bare Word, you have no Reason at all to believe me; and therefore he tells us, that he had not only *John*'s Witness to it, who was his *Forerunner*, but also a much greater than *John*'s, even the Witness of his *Father*, ver. 32, 33, 36, 37. Now there are three Ways by which his Father *testified* for him; all which do abundantly evince his being the *true Mediator*. *First*, by sundry ancient *Predictions* of him, which were all exactly accomplished in him; for *the Testimony of Jesus*, saith St. *John*, *is the Spirit of Prophecy*, Rev. xix. 10. *Secondly*, by sundry *Voices* from *Heaven*, by which the Father proclaimed him his *well beloved Son*. *Thirdly*, by *Miracles*, which by the Power of God he frequently wrought in his *own Person*, while he was upon Earth, and in the Persons of his *Followers* after his Ascension into Heaven. To treat of all which would require a Volume by itself: and therefore for the *first* of these Ways, I shall refer the *English* Reader to the Reverend Mr. *Kidder*'s *Demonstration of the Messias*; wherein the Testimony of *Prophecy* is handled at large, with very great Strength and Clearness of Judgment. And as for the *second* Way of God's bearing Witness to Jesus, *viz.* by *Voices* from *Heaven*; I refer the Reader to our learned Dr. *Hammond*'s *Reasonableness of the Christian Religion*, at the End of his *Practical Catechism*; it being my Intent to insist only upon the *third* and *last* way of God's attesting Jesus to be the Mediator, *viz.* by *Miracles*; for this way our Saviour himself most insists on and appeals to. So in the afore-cited *John* ver. 36. *But I have a greater Witness than that of* John; *for the Works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same Works that I do, bear Witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.* So also *John* x. 25. *The Works which I do in my Father's Name, they bear Witness of me*; and in *John* xv. 24. Our Saviour makes the *inexcusable Aggravation* of the *Jews* Infidelity to be this, that they would not be convinced by all those *miraculous* Works which he had done among them; *If I had not done among them the Works which none other Men did, they had not had Sin, but now have they both seen and hated me and my Father.* In these and sundry other Places, our Saviour appeals to those *miraculous Works* which he did, as to a *certain Testimony* from God, that he was the only *true Messias* or *Mediator* between God and Men. And, indeed, seeing the great *Aim* and *Design* of our Saviour's *Mediation*, is to advance the *Honour* of *God*, and the *Perfection* of *Souls*; and seeing how admirably it is *framed* and *contrived* to promote those blessed Ends; *Miracles* are a most *certain* Attestation of the Truth of it: For though the Scripture tells us of *false Miracles* wrought by the Power of evil Spirits, and History furnishes us with innumerable Instances of it; yet it is against all Reason to imagine, that ever *evil Spirits* would exert their Power to attest a Doctrine so infinitely *repugnant* to their own Temper and Interest. Had the *Design* of our Saviour's *Mediation* been to *alienate* Mens Minds from *God* and

Goodness,

Goodness, we might have justly concluded all his *miraculous* Works to be nothing but *magical Tricks* perform'd by Confederacy with the Devil. For how could we have imagined, either that *God* or any *good Spirit*, would ever have employ'd his Power to propagate a Doctrine so infinitely *repugnant* to his *Will* and *Nature*; seeing it is equally incredible, either that a *bad Religion* should be the *Will* of a *good God*, or that the God of *Truth* should bear false Witness to a *Lye*; And, therefore we always find, that those *false Miracles*, effected by evil Spirits, whereof the Scripture and History make mention, were always wrote to *deprave* Mens Minds with vicious Principles, and to seduce Men from God, to Superstition and Idolatry, or to *confirm* them in it; but that an *impious Spirit* should ever work *Miracles* to promote *true Piety*, to inspire Mens Minds with *great* and *worthy* Thoughts of God, and *suitable* Affections towards him, that a *malicious*, *proud*, *unjust* and *revengeful* Spirit, should by miraculous Signs endeavour to reduce the World to the Practice of *Charity*, *Humility*, *Justice*, *Patience*, *Meekness*, and *Equanimity*, is infinitely incredible: And therefore since the Doctrine of our *Saviour's Mediation* doth, above all the Religions that ever were professed in the World, most powerfully oblige us to *these* and all *other* Instances of *Piety* and *Virtue*; we may depend upon it, that though the Devil had known it to be a *Lye*, he would never have been so great a *Fool* as to cheat the World into the Belief of it; for though he loves to *deceive*, yet there is nothing in Nature he more hates, than to deceive Men into *Piety* and *Virtue*, because hereby he *deceives himself*, and *betrays* his *own* Interest in the World, The *Miracles* of our *Saviour* therefore being all designed to attest a most *pure* and *heavenly* Doctrine, a Doctrine that is throughout exactly *conformable* to the *Nature of God*, and infinitely *abhorrent* to the *Genius* of *Devils*, must necessarily be the Effects of a *Divine* Power; because to work Miracles for the Attestation of such a Doctrine, could be neither agreeable to any *other Nature*, nor serviceable to any *other Interest* but *God's*.

Now of all the *miraculous Testimonies* which God gave to our Saviour, there is none to which he did so often appeal, and upon which he did so much stake the Credit of his Doctrine, as that of his own *Resurrection* from the Dead; for thus when he had perform'd that heroick Act of Zeal, whipping the Money-changers out of the Temple, and the *Jews* required some *Sign* of him, by what Authority he did it, he bad them *destroy this Temple*, pointing to his own Body, *and in three Days I will raise it up again*, John ii. 19. So also, when the Pharisees desired him to give them some *Sign* of his being the true *Messias*, he tells them, that *no other Sign should be given them, but only the Sign of the Prophet* Jonas; *for as* Jonas *was three Days and three Nights in the Whale's Belly, so shall the Son of Man be three Days and three Nights in the Heart of the Earth*; which necessarily implies, that after that he should rise again, *Mark* viii. 12. and accordingly we find that after he was risen and ascended, the *principal* Business of his Apostles was to testify his *Resurrection* to the World; for so, *Acts* i. 22. St. *Peter* makes this to be the Reason why it was necessary, that one should be chosen into the Apostolate, to supply the Room of *Judas*, *that he might be a Witness with them of Christ's Resurrection.* And in *Acts* iv. 33. we are told, *that with great Power the Apostles gave Witness of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus*; and still when they were to prove any Article of the Christian Faith, *this* they urge as the *great Argument*. Thus from the *Resurrection* of Christ, St. *Paul* proves, the *General Resurrection*, 1 *Cor*. xv. so also *Acts* xvii. 31. he proves that God hath appointed a Day wherein he will judge the World in Righteousness, *by that Man whom he hath ordained*, viz. *Christ Jesus*, by this very Topick, *whereof he hath given Assurance unto all Men, in that he hath raised him from the Dead:* And 1 *Pet*. i. 3. that Apostle makes Christ's *Resurrection from the Dead* to be the great Motive of Credibility *by which God hath begotten them again into a lively Hope of* future Happiness; so also, *Acts* ii. 36. *Therefore* (saith the same Apostle, *i. e.* because God had raised him from the Dead, *ver*. 24.) *let all the House of Israel know that God hath made this same Jesus both Lord and Christ*; and *Rom*. i. 4. he is said to be *declared*

clared the Son of God, by the Resurrection from the Dead; yea, so *undoubted* an Argument is this of Christ's being the *true Messias* or *Mediator*, that the *Jews* themselves were convinced, that they must either allow him *to be* so, or else *outface* the *Truth* of his *Resurrection*; which put them upon all possible Ways of stifling the Report of it, knowing that if once it obtained Credit in the World, *the last Error would be worse than the first*, Matth. xxvii. 64. from all which it is evident, that it was taken for granted, not only by *Christ* himself and his *Apostles*, but even by his most avowed *Enemies*, that supposing his *Resurrection* to be true, it would from thence *undeniably* follow, that he was the *Messias* or *Mediator*.

In the Management of this Argument therefore, I shall endeavour these two Things:

First, To prove the *Truth* and *Reality* of this miraculous Attestation, which God gave to our Saviour, *viz*. by *raising* him from the Dead.

Secondly, To shew what an *excellent* convincing Argument this is, of the *Truth* of his Doctrine or Mediation.

I. I shall endeavour to prove the *Truth* and *Reality* of this miraculous Attestation, which God gave to our Saviour, *viz*. by raising him from the Dead; which being a Matter of Fact, independent from all necessary Causes, is capable of no other Proof to those who were not Eye-witnesses of it, but only that of *credible Testimony*. Thus that *Julius Cæsar* was kill'd in the Senate-House, is a Matter of Fact, the Truth of which is acknowledged by all the World, and that Man would be accounted little better than mad, that should make the least doubt of it; and yet we have no other way of proving this, but only by the concurrent *Testimony* of credible *Historians*, which being as great an Evidence as the Matter is *capable* of, is as much as any *reasonable* Man can require to induce him to *believe* it. For although *Testimony* be the only Evidence by which Matters of Fact can be proved; yet it is such an Evidence as hath Force enough in it to induce any *reasonable* Man to *believe* its Proposals: And there are Ten thousand Things which we do as firmly assent to upon the Evidence of *Testimony*, as to any Propositions upon the Evidence of *mathematical Demonstration*. If therefore the *Resurrection* of our Saviour be but sufficiently attested, that is as good an Argument of the Truth of it, as the Nature of the Thing will bear; and when it is made but as apparent that a Thing *is*, as it could possibly be if it really *were*, there is no farther Proof of it can be reasonably expected; and, if notwithstanding this, Men will not *believe*, it is impossible that any Reason should *convince* them: But in *this Testimony* of our Saviour's Resurrection there is as much *Evidence* aud *Credibility*, as there can be in *any Testimony* whatsoever. For to give a Testimony of the *utmost* Force of *Credibility*, six Things are requir'd: *First*, That they that give it, should be certainly *informed* of the Truth of what they do attest. *Secondly*, That there should be a *Concurrence* of a sufficient *Number* of Witnesses. *Thirdly*, That there should be no *visible Reason* to suspect their *Truth* and *Integrity*. *Fourthly*, That there should be no *apparent Motive* to induce them to give *false* Witness. *Fifthly*, That they give some great *Security* for the Truth of what they say. And *Sixthly*, That they also produce some certain *Sign* or *Token* of the *Reality* of their Testimony. And when all these Circumstances do *concur* in a *Testimony*, they render it as *highly credible* as it is possible for a *Testimony* to be. Now in that *Testimony* which we have of our Saviour's *Resurrection*, there was, as I shall shew in the Particulars, a *full Concurrence* of them all. For,

I. They who testified it, were *certainly informed* whether it were true or no; for they declare that they were *Eye* and *Ear-witnesses* of it, *Acts* iii. 15. and relate at large the familiar Conversation they had with him after his Resurrection, *Acts* x. 41. and they tell the Story of it with so many *Circumstances*, that it is impossible they should be *deceived*: For at his Resurrection they find the Stone *rolled away* from the Mouth of his Sepulchre, and *no Body* therein, although

though it was guarded by Soldiers; ſo that it was impoſſible for any Body to ſteal him away; and that it was his *own Body* wherein he aroſe, and no *aërial Phantaſm*, evidently appears by what he did to convince St. *Thomas*, who would not believe, unleſs he might put his Hand into the *Hole* of his *Side*, and ſee the Print of the *Nails* that pierced his *Hands*, to which our Saviour readily condeſcended; and ſo far were the Apoſtles from being *over-credulous*, that when he appeared to them after his Reſurrection, it is ſaid, that they ſuſpected him to be a *Spirit*, or *walking Ghoſt*, and to convince them of their Miſtake, he was fain to appeal to the Judgment of their Senſes, *Handle me*, *and ſee me*, ſaith he, *for a Spirit hath not Fleſh and Bones as ye ſee me have*, Luke xxiv. 39. and afterwards, more fully to ſatisfy their *yet ſcrupulous* Minds, he *eat* and *drank* in the Midſt of them, *ver.* 43. Now, the more *ſuſpicious* and *incredulous* they were at firſt, the greater Evidence it is, that they were *throughly* informed of what they teſtified, that there was an *undeniable* Evidence in the Thing, elſe how could it have ſatisfied ſuch *ſcrupulous* and *incredulous* Perſons, and that they were far from being willing to be *abuſed themſelves*, or from having any Deſign to *abuſe* the *World*. And that their outward *Senſe* was not *impoſed* upon by the Strength of their *Imagination*, is evident, in that he converſed with them forty Days together, which was too long a Time for their Senſes to miſtake an *Image* of their *Fancies* for a *Reality*. For how is it conceivable, that ſo many Perſons as pretended to ſee him after his Reſurrection, ſhould for forty Days together *imagine* that they *ſaw* him, *heard* him, *eat* and *drank* with him, when in reality all this Scene of Things was nothing but a *Dream* or *Spectre* of their own *Fancies*? That their *Fancies* ſhould create and repreſent a Perſon to them frequently *appearing* to them, preaching and inſtructing them, giving out *Commiſſions*, and adminiſtring holy *Ordinances* to them? That their *Fancies* ſhould draw them out to the Mount of *Olives* after a *Spectre*, that was viſible no where, but upon the Stage of their own *Imaginations*, and there repreſent it carried up into Heaven on a Cloud? Surely, if they were in their *Wits*, it was impoſſible for them to believe ſuch a Train of *Things* to be *real*, had they been only the *Images* of their *Fancies*: And yet that they were in their *Wits*, is as apparent as the Sun, both from their *unanimous Conſent* in the Relation of the Fact, with all its Circumſtances, and from thoſe *wiſe* and *ſober Writings* which they left behind them, which abound with excellent *Morals*, ſolid and coherent *Reaſonings*, ſtrong and powerful *Perſuaſions*, without the leaſt Intermixture either of flat *Impertinence*, or ranting *Enthuſiaſm*; which is a plain Demonſtration, that they were *certainly informed* concerning the Matter of Fact which they teſtified, whether it were true or falſe.

II. Another Circumſtance requiſite to render a Teſtimony highly *credible*, is, the *Concurrence* of *ſeveral Witneſſes*; of which we have a *remarkable* Inſtance in this Teſtimony of our Saviour's *Reſurrection*. For if thoſe Five hundred Brethren and upwards, who, as St. *Paul* tells us, ſaw our Saviour after he was riſen, 1 *Cor.* xv. 6. you add the *Congregation* of the Diſciples he appear'd to, when he baffled the Infidelity of St. *Thomas*, together with thoſe great *Aſſemblies* that ſaw him in the Mount of *Galilee*, and upon Mount *Olivet*, from whence he aſcended; it is not improbable, but that there were ſome *Thouſands* of Perſons that ſaw him after his *Reſurrection*, among all whom, we find the moſt exact *Agreement* both in the Matter and Circumſtances of what they did atteſt, which, had it not been *true*, muſt have been morally *impoſſible*. For how could ſo *vaſt* a Number of Men have ſo *punctually* agreed in the ſame Story, had it been a *Lye*? eſpecially when they were ſo narrowly *ſifted*, ſo craftily *examined*, and *croſs examined*, as doubtleſs theſe Men were (or at leaſt would have been, had there been any juſt Ground to ſuſpect them) by the *Jewiſh* Magiſtrates, who were all of them profeſs'd Enemies to our Saviour and his Doctrine. For had their Teſtimony been *forged*, it is not imaginable how they ſhould *foreſee* what Queſtions the Magiſtrates would propoſe to them; nor conſequently, how they ſhould *agree* what *Anſwers* to return to their ſeveral Interrogatories: ſo that when they came to be examined, they muſt of neceſſity have *thwarted* and *contradicted* one another,

another, at leaſt in ſome Circumſtances of Time or Place, or the like, by which means the whole Forgery muſt have ſoon been unravelled, and the Credit of it for ever daſh'd out of Countenance. But that no ſuch Thing ever happened, is evident by the *Credit* which their Teſtimony found, even among thoſe who had the *beſt Opportunities* of examining whether it were true or falſe; for the *Truth* of Chriſt's *Doctrine* depending upon the *Truth* of this Story of his *Reſurrection*, there can be no doubt, but the *Jewiſh* Magiſtrates, whoſe Intereſt made them *Enemies* to Chriſt, would not have been wanting, had they thought it feaſible, to try all Ways to *diſprove* the Truth of it; and if they did *not*, no other Reaſon can be given of it, but only this, that the *Truth* of the Thing was ſo *notorious*, that it would have been *ridiculous* for them to attempt the diſproving it; but if they *did*, it had been a very eaſy Matter for them, had it been a Lye, to have *detected* it: For the *Number* of the *Witneſſes* being ſo great, and the *Jews* having every Day Opportunity of converſing with them, they might have eaſily *trapp'd* them in their Relations, it being impoſſible, that among a great Number of conſpiring *Impoſtors*, there ſhould be always an exact *Harmony* and *Agreement*: For ſuppoſe that ſuch a Story as this were told in *London*, that a certain Man dwelling at *Weſtminſter*, and pretending himſelf to be the Son of God, and the lawful Heir of the Crown of *England*, had preach'd up a new Religion, requiring all People, under Pain of Damnation, to embrace his Doctrine, and ſubmit to his Government; and that as a Sign of the Truth of all this, he had publickly declared, that three Days after his Death he would riſe again: Whereupon the laſt *Friday* was ſev'n-night he was put to Death by the Magiſtrates, and notwithſtanding he was buried, and his Sepulchre dammed up with a huge Stone, and a Guard of Soldiers ſet to watch it, leſt his Proſelytes ſhould ſteal him away, yet the *Sunday* following he aroſe, and hath ſince been ſeen by ſeveral hundreds, if not ſome thouſands of the Neighbourhood, many of whom had touched and handled him, eat, and drank, and converſed familiarly with him, among whom there was *Peter* ſuch-a-one, *Thomas* ſuch-a-one, *John* ſuch-a-one, naming ſome twenty or thirty Perſons well known among the Neighbours, who could give a more particular Account of the Matter, and tell the Names of moſt of the Perſons that were *Eye-witneſſes* with them: Why now, it cannot be ſuppoſed, but that as ſoon as ever this formal Rumour began to ſpread (eſpecially if it found Credit among the Multitude, and the pretended Witneſſes of it ſhould be ſo bold as to go and aſſert it before the King and Council, as the Apoſtles did before the Rulers of the *Jews*) I ſay, it cannot be ſuppoſed, but that Care would be taken, that the Matter ſhould be immediately ſifted, and the ſeveral neighbouring Juſtices required to call theſe Witneſſes to account; who, by pumping and examining, promiſing and threatning them, could not fail of extorting the Truth from them in a very little while: For it is impoſſible but they muſt have found them faltering in the relation of their Story, and counter-witneſſing one another. *John* would have told it with this Circumſtance, and *Peter* with the contrary, and *Thomas* would have thwarted and contradicted them both; ſo that when they came to compare their ſeveral Relations with one another, in all probability they would have found as great a *Confuſion* among them, as there was in the Language of the Bricklayers of *Babel*. And therefore though at firſt perhaps the Story might have ſeemed *plauſible*, and a great many *credulous* People might have believed it, yet every Day would have render'd it more ſuſpicious, and the *Truth* muſt at laſt have *triumph'd* and *prevailed*: But yet though the *Eye-witneſſes* of our Saviour's *Reſurrection* were thus *ſifted* and *examined* over and over, their Relation every one Day got Ground and *Credit* even in *Jeruſalem* itſelf, where the Thing was tranſacted, and where every one might eaſily *inform* himſelf concerning the Credit of the *Relaters*, and the Circumſtances of their *Relation*; inſomuch that forty Days after, it was ſo far from being *daſhed* out of Countenance, that at *one* Sermon of St. *Peter*'s, there were no leſs than *three thouſand* Perſons

converted to the Belief of it; and so it still grew and increased, till at last in despite of all the *Wit* and *Malice* of its Opposers, it was embraced and acknowledged throughout all the World; which is an undeniable Evidence of the *exact Agreement* there was in the Testimony of the several *Witnesses* of our Saviour's *Resurrection.*

III. Another Circumstance requisite to render a *Testimony* highly *credible*, is, when there is no visible Reason to suspect the *Honesty* and *Integrity* of the Attestors; which Circumstance did also concur to credit the *Testimony* of our *Saviour's Resurrection:* For that the first Testifiers of it were Men of a *clear* and *unsuspected* Honesty, will appear to any Man that seriously considers either the *Doctrine* which they taught, or the *Genius* of their *Followers*, or the *Manner* of their *Testimony*, or the *Success* it had among those who were best able to satisfy themselves whether they were honest or no. *First*, As for their *Doctrine*, there is nothing can be more *contrary* to lying, dissembling and hypocritical Reservation, it strictly requires *Plainness* and *Simplicity* of Speech, and that our *Words* should be the Images and Interpreters of our *Minds*, it brands and stigmatizes all *Deceit* and *Falshood* with a most *infamous* Character, and irrevocably consigns all wilful *Lyars* to the *miserable* Portion of the Father of Lyes. If then they believed their *own Doctrine*, it is not to be imagined they would ever have defended it with *Frauds* and *Impostures*; and whether they believed it or no, it is hardly supposable, that they would have so loudly declaimed against *Dishonesty*, had they been at least visibly *dishonest themselves*; since by condemning it in *others*, they must have libelled *themselves*, and imblazoned to the World their *own* Shame and Infamy. And then, *Secondly*, As for the *Genius* and *Temper* of their Disciples and Followers, it's plain, that there never was any Thing more *open* and *sincere:* For such was the *ingenuous Simplicity* of the Primitive Christians, that they thought it a Disparagement to be put to their Oaths, thinking it sufficient for every good Man to give this Assurance of his Truth, ἀληθῶς λέγω, *I speak truly*; and when they were most *severely* examined by their bloody Persecutors, concerning their Faith, they never either *denied* or *concealed* it, counting it a most *impious* Thing to *dissemble* the Truth; and though when they were questioned, they could easily have either *denied* or *evaded* it, yet they *scorned* to live upon such *base Terms*, to be beholden to their *Hypocrisy* for their *Lives*; yea, so conspicuous was their *Honesty* to all the World, that the *Heathen* themselves were forced to *acknowledge* it: For so *Pliny*, in the Account which he gave the Emperor *Trajan* of the Christians, tells him, That after the *strictest* Enquiry he could make of them, even of those who had renounced Christianity, he found this to be the greatest Fault they were guilty of, that they used harmlesly to meet to worship Christ, and at those Meetings to bind themselves by a *Sacrament*, that they would not do any *Wickedness*, that they would not *steal*, nor *rob*, nor commit *Adultery*, nor *falsify* their Words, nor *with-hold* any Thing wherewith they had been *intrusted*, where ever it were required at their Hands. Such was the Temper of the *immediate Disciples* of the *Eye-witnesses* of our Saviour's *Resurrection*; and is it likely that the *Scholars* would have proved so honest, had they not been taught by the Example, as well as by the Doctrine of their *Masters?* For to be sure, had the *Apostles* been dishonest, their immediate *Disciples* must needs have *known* something of it; and being *acquainted* with it, they would doubtless have resolved either not to *continue* their *Disciples* any longer, or else to have *imitated* them in all their secret Cheats and Knaveries; and so from the *Masters* to the *Disciples*, Dishonesty would have been propagated from one Generation to another; but since the contrary happen'd, it's plain, that the first *Propagators* were Men of very *honest* and *sincere* Minds; which will yet farther appear, if we consider, *Thirdly*, the *Manner* of their *Testimony*, which they delivered with the greatest *Plainness* and *Simplicity* of Speech, the greatest *Freedom* and *Assurance* of Spirit, and the greatest *particularity*, as to all its Circumstances. They never went about to involve their Sense in *ambiguous* Words,

or to recommend it to the World in a *pompous* Style, in *pedantick* Flourishes, or *flattering* Insinuations, which is the Way of all *Impostors:* But as Men that were well assured of the *Truth* of what they said, they exposed it to the World in the most *naked* and *simple* Expressions, and so left it to recommend itself; they did not whisper their Testimony in *Corners*, as if they were either afraid or ashamed to produce it in the *open Light*; but with the greatest Confidence and Assurance they published it in the *midst* of *Jerusalem*, yea, and before the *Sanhedrin* itself; where, if it had been false, 'twas impossible but it should be *detected*; and whereas 'tis the Way of Impostors to reserve themselves in *Generals*, knowing that should they descend to *Particulars*, 'twould be hard for them to avoid *Discovery* or *Contradiction*; the Apostles did not only report a *general* Story of Christ's Resurrection, but related it with all its most *minute* and particular Circumstances; nor did they *change* or *alter* any one of them upon different *Examinations* before different Examiners, but still persisted with the greatest *Constancy* to themselves, and *Harmony* with each other; so that if ever there might be any Thing gathered of the *Temper* of Persons from the particular Manner of their *Discourses*, we may certainly discern the greatest *Fidelity* in the Apostles in the *Manner* of their expressing themselves to the World. But then in the fourth and last Place, the *Credit* which they found among those who were best able to satisfy themselves whether they were honest or no, is a further Evidence of their *Fidelity*; for had they not been Men of *known Honesty*, it is not to be imagined that they could ever have obtained so much *Credit* in a Place, where they were so intimately *known*, and among Persons with whom they every Day conversed with the greatest *Openness* and *Freedom*; especially considering how *contrary* their Testimony was to the *Genius* and *Interest* of those who gave Credit to them, many of whose Hands had been imbrued in the Blood of our Saviour; by which they were obliged, in their own *Vindication*, so far as in them lay, to disprove the Story of his Resurrection; because, if that proved true, it proved them guilty of the most monstrous *Impiety* that ever was acted, *viz.* the Murder of the Son of God. And is it likely that the *Murderers* of our Saviour would ever have believed the Story of his *Resurrection*, which was so clear an Evidence of *his Innocency*, and *their own Guilt*, had they had any Reason to *suspect* the *Veracity* of those that attested it; and yet in *despite* of themselves, great Numbers of them were forced to believe it, although as soon as they did so, they were *pricked at the Heart* with the Sense of their horrid Impiety, and forced to cry out in a bitter Agony of Conscience, *Men and Brethren, what shall we do to be saved?* And as for those of them who had *no* Hand in his Murder, to be sure they were greatly prejudiced against the Belief of his *Resurrection*, because upon that depended the Truth of his *Doctrine*, which plainly contradicted a great Part of that *Religion* in which they had been *educated*, and of which they were infinitely *zealous*; and therefore to be sure they would never have given Credit to it, had they not had *undeniable Evidence* of the *Truth* and *Integrity* of those that testified it, especially when it was so easy for them to satisfy themselves about it: For 'tis not imaginable they would ever have entertained so ungrateful a Story, but upon the most strict Enquiry into the Credit of its Relators; and if upon Enquiry they had found the least Flaw either in *them*, or in their *Testimony*, if they could have convicted them of any *dishonest Practices* for the Time *past*, or catched them tripping or contradicting one another in what they testified at *present*, they would soon have made the World ring of it, and the *Jews* who were dispersed through all the neighbouring Nations, would have divulged to all the World their *fraudulent Practices*, and posted them up where-ever they came for infamous *Knaves* and *Lyars*; which must have infallibly *blasted* the *Credit* of their Testimony, and caused it to have been hissed out of the World for a fulsome *Imposture*. Wherefore since no such Thing ever happened; but contrariwise the *Credit* of their Report of Christ's Resurrection, did, in *despite* of all the Wit and Malice of its Opposers, every Day *spread* and *encrease*, even in

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Jerusalem itself, where the Thing was *acted*, and where the Reporters of it *lived*, and that not only for a few Days or Months, but from *Year* to *Year*, even till *Jerusalem* itself was destroyed; since, I say, all this is so evident, what greater Argument can we desire of the *Truth* and *Integrity* of those that attested it? And supposing them to be honest, their *Testimony* must be *true*, because it was not Matter of *Opinion*, in which it is possible for the wisest Men to be mistaken, but Matter of *Fact*, of which they had certain Information from their own *Senses*; and he who says that he *saw* such a Thing, and it's evident that his Senses were not *imposed on*, lies against his own *Conscience*, if it be not true that he saw it.

IV. Another Circumstance requisite to render a *Testimony* highly *credible*, is, that there is no *apparent Motive* to induce the Attestors of it to testify falsly. For whether they are honest or no, we cannot well suppose, that in a Matter of Importance they will testify *falsly*, without some great *Motive* inducing them thereunto; but as for the *Witnesses* of our Saviour's *Resurrection*, had they not been *certain* of the Truth of it, they could have *no* imaginable *Motive* to induce them to attest it; for they could never hope to reap the least *Advantage* from it either here or hereafter; not *here*, for their Lord had told them before-hand, *that if they would be his Disciples, they must suffer Persecution*; and they themselves could not but foresee, that by testifying his *Resurrection*, they must infallibly alarm all the World against them, because the *Doctrine* which they confirmed by it was extremely opposite both to the *present Religion* and *Interest* of the *Jews*, and to the common *Theology* of the *Gentiles*; and that therefore by going about to establish *it*, they must in effect proclaim War against all the World, and consequently expose themselves to the utmost *Rigour* and *Severity* that the Wit and Malice of Men could invent or inflict; which must be a very *sorry Motive* sure to induce Men in their Wits to undertake the Propagation of a *known Imposture*. But perhaps it may be thought they did all this for the *Glory* and *Reputation* of being the *Founders* of a new *Sect*. But from whence, I beseech you, could they promise themselves *Success*? not from their Master *Jesus*, who, if their Testimony was not *true*, they could not but know was still detained under the Power of the *Grave*; not from *God*, whom, if they testified falsly, they were conscious they wickedly *belyed* in suborning his *Power* and *Veracity* to bear Witness to a *Falshood*; not from the Force and Charms of their own *Eloquence* or *Sophistry*, for that they pretended not to; not from their *Riches*, for their Staves and Scrips were all the Treasure they carried with them; nor from any *Authority* or *Power* they had, or ever were like to have; for how could such poor illiterate Persons as they, ever expect to arrive to an Authority great enough to contest with all the Power and Wisdom of the World which was armed against them; in a Word, not from any *Proneness* they found either in *Jews* or *Gentiles*, to embrace the Doctrine which they designed by this their *Testimony* to confirm and assert, that being every where *gain-said* and *opposed* by the Interests and Affections of both; and if their Testimony was not believed (as 'twas very unlikely it should, if it had not been *true*) what could they expect but to be branded to all Posterity, as a Company of infamous Cheats and Impostors? So that unless they had been assured that their Testimony was *true*, they had all the Reason in the World to expect that it would prove the most *fatal* and *unprofitable Lye* that ever was invented or broached among Mankind; since it was so far from promising them any worldly *Advantage*, that it visibly exposed them to all the *Miseries* and *Calamities* of human Life. And then if they knew this Story of Christ's *Resurrection*, which they attested, to be a *Lye*, they had a great deal less Reason to expect any *Advantage* from it in the World to *come*: For either they *believed* that *Religion* which they sought to confirm, by attesting this Story, or they did *not*; if they did *not*, how could they hope to fare ever the *better* in the *other* World for endeavouring to propagate a false Religion in *this*? If they *did*, how would they hope to be made happy hereafter, by telling

a *Lye*

a *Lye* for that *Religion* which excommunicates *Lyars* out of the Kingdom of Happiness? Since therefore if their *Testimony* had been *false*, they could expect to reap no Advantage from it in either World, doubtless they would never have been so mad as to assert and attest it, had they not known it to be *true*; for what Man in his Wits would ever tell a *Lye*, that hath no reason to expect any other Fruit from it, but only to *die* for it here, and to be *damned* for it hereafter?

V. Another Circumstance requisite to render a *Testimony* highly *credible*, is, that the Testifiers of it do give some great *Security* for the Truth of what they say; and therefore it is required by human Laws, that in all great Matters of Fact the *Witnesses* should give the Security of their *Oaths*, or of some great *Pledge* to be forfeited by them, in case their Testimony prove *false*. But never did any Men give *greater Security* of their Truth, than the *Witnesses* of our Saviour's *Resurrection*; for they sealed their Testimony with their *Blood*, and rather chose to undergo the most witty and exquisite *Torments*, than to *recant* any Part or Circumstance of what they had seen and testified concerning it: For of all the *Apostles*, who were the chief *Witnesses* of it, there was only one that escaped a *violent* Death, and he, as the Ecclesiastical Story tells us, had not been delivered from it but by a Miracle. And doubtless those other *Disciples*, who saw and conversed with our Saviour after he was risen, and together with the *Apostles*, bore Witness of it to the World, did proportionably run the same Fate: And how is it imaginable, that so many Men should all turn so mad together, as to lay down their *Lives* for a Pledge of the *Truth* of a Story, which they knew to be all a mere *Cheat* and *Imposture*? Some Men indeed have suffered Martyrdom for professing Propositions that were *false*, but then they *thought* them to be *true*; but no Man in his Wits ever died in the Defence of an Assertion which he *knew* to be *false*. But as for the Testifiers of our Saviour's *Resurrection*, they did all of them witness upon *certain Information*, and did assuredly *know* whether their Testimony were *true* or *false*; so that if Christ did *not* rise, as they reported, they died in the Defence of a *known Lye*, which is such a piece of *Folly*, as doth exceed all Instances of *Extravagance*. Suppose that *Æsop* should have died a Martyr to his own Fables, or that the Author of the Seven Champions should have laid down his Life in the Defence of St. *George*'s killing the Dragon, would not all the World have concluded them incurably *distracted*? But as for the *Apostles*, their excellent *Writings* are a sufficient Demonstration, that they were Men of very *sound Intellectuals*, and therefore though we should suppose them to be so *wicked* as to love lying for its *own* sake, we cannot suppose them to be so *mad* as to love it better than their own *Lives*, as they must necessarily do, if their *Testimony* of our Saviour's Resurrection were *false*. But supposing that one or two of them should have proved so *frantick*, yet it is incredible that so many *hundreds* of Men and Women should all *agree* together at the same time in the same *mad Project*, *viz.* to throw away their *Lives* for no other Purpose but only to *cheat* and *abuse* the World; and that no *one* of them should be induced, by all the *Hopes* and *Fears* that were set before them, to *confess* and *discover* the mad Conspiracy. When they began to report the Story, they could not but foresee the *Consequence* of it, *viz.* that they must either *recant* it, and thereby proclaim themselves *Impostors* to the World, or else lay down their *Lives* for it. So that had they known it to be *false*, it would have been a Prodigy of *Impudence* in them, and *Folly* together, not only without Hope of *Benefit*, but within Prospect of a certain *Ruin*, to have divulged a *known Lye* to the World, and under the *severest* Persecutions to have persisted in it without the least Regret of *Conscience*, or Concernment for their own *Ease* and *Safety*. There never was the like Instance among Men, and I dare say, there never will be, so long as Men love themselves, and continue in their Wits; and to imagine *that* of the Witnesses of our Saviour's Resurrection, of which there is no parallel *Example* among Mankind, is an Argument that we have much more *Inclination* than *Reason* to be Infidels. This therefore is plain, that the *Witnesses* of Christ's

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Resurrection gave as great a *Pledge* of the Truth of their *Testimony*, as it was possible for mortal Men to do; and if those Men may not be believed, who attest a Thing upon certain *Knowledge*, and seal it with their *Blood*, there is no Credit can be given to any *human Testimony*; because a Man's *Life* is the greatest *Security* that he can possibly give for his *Honesty*.

VI. Another Circumstance requisite to render a *Testimony* highly *credible*, is, that the *Witnesses* do give some certain *Sign* and *Token*, that what they testify is *true*; and this the *Eye-witnesses* of our Saviour's *Resurrection* did: For in token that what they said was true, they themselves wrought sundry *Miracles* in his Name; for so we read of the Apostles, *that they went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with Signs following*, Mark xvi. 20. and that *with great Power*, i. e. miraculous Works, *the Apostles gave Witness of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus*, Acts iv. 33. and also at *Iconium the Lord gave Testimony to the Word of his Grace, and granted Signs and Wonders to be done by their Hands*, Acts xiv. 3. And the same was done by St. *Stephen* at *Jerusalem*, Acts vi. 8. and by St. *Philip* at *Samaria*, Acts viii. 6, 7. and by St. *Paul* at *Ephesus*, Acts xix. 11. And St. *Paul* assures us, *That from* Jerusalem, *and round about unto* Illyricum, *the Gospel had been preached by him, with mighty Signs and Wonders, and by the Power of the Holy Ghost*, Rom. xv. 19. all which Things being recorded in an *Age*, wherein, if they had been *false*, they might easily have been *disproved*, it had been the wildest Project in the World for the *Apostles* to have pretended to them, had they not been *notoriously true*; for they must needs think, that all the World being *prejudiced* against them, would be sure to keep a very *strict* and *watchful* Eye on them; and that if upon the severest Inquiry, they were at any time taken tripping in this their Pretence of working *Miracles*, their Fraud would soon ring through all the World, which must unavoidably *prejudice* their Cause a thousand times more than all the *Miracles* they pretended to, could *advance* it; and for Men that had the Eyes of all the World upon them, falsly to pretend to work such innumerable *Miracles* as they did, and this not in Corners, but in *publick* View, and to name the Places where they wrought them, and where they knew there were Thousands that could and would certainly *detect* and *disprove* them, would have been the most prodigious Instance of *Impudence* and *Folly* together that ever was acted by Men in their Wits. But so notoriously *true* was the Matter of *Fact*, that their most inveterate *Enemies* amongst both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, have not the Confidence to *deny* it, although indeed they attribute it, even as the *Jews* did our Saviour's Miracles, to the Power of *Magick*; for so in their *Talmud, Tractat. de Idol. c.* 1. the *Jews* celebrate St. *James* the Apostle as eminent for the Gift of Mircles, by whom the Nephew of *Rab. Samuel* being bit of a Serpent, would not be cured, because every Disciple of Jesus was wont to heal in his Name. And *Lib. Sabbat. Jerosol.* they tell us of a Son of *Rab. Jose*, who having swallowed Poyson, was cured by a Christian in the Name of Jesus. And as for the Heathen *Julian* himself, he confesses that St. *Paul* did very wonderful Things; for he says, that he was the greatest and most expert *Magician* that ever was, *vid. Cyril. Alex. lib.* 3. and the same he pronounces of St. *Peter* also, *ib. lib.* 9. So also *Celsus* frequently charges the Christians with doing their mighty Works by the Power of some *Dæmon*, adding a Fiction of his own, *viz.* That they had received from Christ certain magical Books, by which they were instructed to perform all their Miracles, *vid. Origen. cont. Cels. p.* 302. and several other Places; which is a plain Confession, that such *Miracles* were commonly *performed* by Christians: But that they did *not* perform them by any Confederacy with *evil Spirits*, as these bad Men affirm, is evident, because one of their greatest and most common Miracles was *dispossessing* these evil Spirits of Mens *Bodies*, and their own *Temples* and *Oracles*: For the Truth of which, they often provoke their Adversaries in their Writings and Apologies, to come and make Experiment of it. Thus St. *Cyprian* in his Epistle to *Demetrian*, Proconsul of *Africa, O that thou wouldst but hear and see, when the Devils, whom thou worshippest, are*

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adjured and tortured by us, and with the spiritual Rods and Torments of our Words are ejected out of the Bodies they possess, when howling and roaring in a human Voice they confess the Judgment to come: Do but come and see, whether these Things we say are not true. And a little after, *If thou wilt come,* saith he, *thou shalt see those whom thou worshippest for Gods, stand bound and tremble as miserable Captives under our Hands.* Others of them appeal to the Consciences of the Heathens themselves, who had been *Spectators* of their *miraculous Victories* over these Infernal Spirits. So *Minutius Fælix, All these Things are very well known to a great many of yourselves, that your Gods are forced by us to confess themselves Devils, when, by the Torment of our Words, and by the Fire of our Prayers, they are chased out of human Bodies; even* Saturn *and* Serapis, *and* Jupiter, *and the greatest of those Gods you worship, being overcome, with Sorrow are forced to acknowledge what they are; and though it be to their Shame, especially when you are present, yet they dare not lye, but being adjured by the true and only God, they quake and tremble in the Bodies they possess, and either leap out immediately, or vanish by degrees.* Others of them offer to make the *Experiment,* even before the Tribunals of the Heathen, and to answer for the Success with their own Lives. So *Tertullian* in his Apologetick, *Let any Man that is apparently acted by one of your Gods, be brought before your own Tribunals; and if that supposed God being commanded by any Christian to speak, doth not confess himself to be a Devil, as not daring to lye to a Christian, take that malapert Christian and pour out his Blood immediately. Yea, how often,* saith he, a little after, *only upon our touch of and breathing upon possessed Persons, are these Gods you adore, forced to depart out of their Bodies with Grief and Reluctancy, you yourselves being present, and blushing at it.* And these Things, as *Origen* tells us, *Cont. Cels. lib.* 7. were ordinarily performed even by the *meanest Christians,* which is a plain Argument that it was done merely by the Power of Jesus, without any *Conjuration* or *magical* Art. And can we imagine that the *Devil,* without any Constraint from some superiour Power, would ever have *quitted* that Tyranny he had so *long* exercised over the *Bodies* and *Consciences* of Men, who had hitherto adored and worshipped him; or that he would ever have *confessed* himself to be a *Devil* to those Men who sought the *Ruin* of his *Kingdom,* and made use of his Confessions to that purpose, had he not been *forced* to it by the Authority of the *Father* of Spirits? Is it likely, he would have exerted his Power to the *Ruin* of his *own* Interest, and the *Amendment* of those Souls he had *insnared* and *captivated,* as he must necessarily have done, should he have *impowered* the Witnesses of our Saviour's *Resurrection,* to confirm their Testimony by *Miracles?* And since they all along declared they did them in the *Name* and by the *Power* of *Jesus,* to be sure if it had not been *so,* the God of *Truth* would never have *impowered* them to impose such a Cheat upon the World. These Miracles of theirs therefore were *plain Signs* and *Tokens* of the *Truth* of what they did attest, *viz.* that Jesus was risen from the Dead; and that not only as they were so many Divine *Seals,* by which God himself did *confirm* their Testimony, whose *Goodness* and *Veracity* could never have permitted him to set the *Seal* of his *miraculous Power* to a *Lye:* But besides this, the Apostles Miracles were so many plain *Demonstrations* that Jesus was *risen,* and *alive,* since they did them all in *his Name,* and by *his Power:* For how is it possible, that Jesus could have *impowered* them to do *Miracles,* had he been still among the *Dead,* and in a State of *Inactivity?* A *dead* Man can do nothing *himself,* much less can he impower *others* to do Miracles. So that by those *miraculous Works* which the Apostles did by the *Power* of *Christ,* they did in effect thus bespeak the World; Look here, O incredulous World, if nothing else will persuade you that our Lord is *risen,* and *alive,* behold the *vital Operations* which he exerts in us his Disciples, tho' of ourselves we are as impotent as you, yet no sooner do we invoke our great *Master's Name,* and implore *his Aid,* but we are presently *enabled* to perform mighty Things beyond the Power of any *mortal* Agent; without any other Charm but his *powerful Name,* we raise the *Dead,* bind the *Devils,* restore the *Blind,* recover the *Lame,* and cure all manner of *Diseases;* and is not this as *plain* a Token of his being *alive,* as if he were

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now ſtanding before you in our room, and doing all theſe Things in his *own Perſon?* If he were *dead* ſtill, he could not *act* in us, as you ſee him do; and therefore if nothing elſe will convince ye that he is *alive* again, behold theſe mighty *Powers* which he exerts in *us*; and be at length perſuaded by theſe *ſenſible* Tokens of his *Activity*, which we produce before your Eyes, that he is *riſen* from the *dead:* For it is worth obſerving, that this Gift of *Miracles* was never ſo plentifully *communicated* to the Apoſtles as *after* Chriſt's *Aſcenſion* into Heaven; for before he aſcended, he commanded them to *tarry at* Jeruſalem, *till they had received the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt*; or, which is the ſame Thing, the Gift of Miracles, *Acts* i. 4, 5. and this Gift, as he himſelf tells them, *ver.* 8. was to enable them *to bear Teſtimony to him unto all the World*; for he being now aſcended into Heaven, they could no longer produce his *Perſon* to convince Unbelievers of the Truth of his *Reſurrection*; and therefore to *ſupply* this Defect, Chriſt gave them the Gift of *Miracles*, that that might be inſtead of his bodily *Preſence* a *plain* and *ſenſible* Token of his being reſtored to *Life* again. And indeed this was as *certain* a *Sign* of it, as if he had continued upon *Earth*, and openly *converſed* among *Men* in the View of the World; for the moſt *certain* Sign of *Life* is *Action*, and by what hath been ſaid, it is apparent, that Chriſt did not more *viſibly* act in his *own Perſon*, when he was upon Earth, than he did in the Perſons of his *Apoſtles* after he aſcended into Heaven. Theſe *miraculous Operations* therefore, which they perform'd by the Power of Jeſus, were all of them ſo many *plain* and *ſenſible Signs* and *Tokens* of the *Truth* of what they did atteſt, *viz.* That Jeſus was riſen from the Dead. So that conſidering all theſe *Circumſtances* of the Apoſtles *Teſtimony*, I dare boldly affirm, that from the Beginning of the World to this Day, there never was any Matter of *Fact* more *ſufficiently* and *credibly* teſtified than this of the *Reſurrection* of our Saviour; and by raiſing *him* from the Dead, God hath bore *Witneſs* to him before all the World; that he really is what he *pretended* to be, the *true* Meſſias and *only* Mediator between himſelf and us.

Which brings me to the Second Head I propoſed, to ſhew what an excellent *convincing* Argument this is of the *Truth* of our Saviour's *Doctrine* and *Mediation*, and how effectually it juſtifies his *Pretence* of being the *true* Meſſias and *only Mediator*. 'Tis true, all the *Miracles* which our Saviour wrought while he was upon Earth, were plain *Demonſtrations* of his being *ſent* from *God*; and therefore to theſe, as I ſhewed before, he frequently *appeals* in his excellent Diſputations with the unbelieving *Jews*; and when *John Baptiſt* ſent to inquire of him whether he were the Meſſias or no; he returns no other Anſwer but this, *Go and ſhew* John *thoſe Things which ye ſee and hear, that the Blind receive their Sight, and the Lame walk, the Lepers are cleanſed, and the Deaf hear, and the Dead are raiſed up, and the Poor have the Goſpel preached unto them*, Matth. xi. 4, 5. But his own *Reſurrection* being the *greateſt Miracle* that he ever performed, to this both *himſelf* and his *Apoſtles* did moſt commonly *appeal*; inſomuch that St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 14. ſays, *That if Chriſt be not riſen, then is our Preaching vain, and our Faith vain*; becauſe *this* being the *grand Miracle* upon which Chriſt ſtaked the *Credit* of his whole *Doctrine*; if this had *failed*, there had been no Reaſon to give any *Credit* to any thing that he taught. The *Reſurrection* of Chriſt therefore is a certain *Evidence* of the Truth of his *Doctrine*; only as it was the *greateſt* of his miraculous Works, it proved his Doctrine no otherwiſe than his *other* Miracles did; but it was the *higheſt Proof* of it, as it was the *greateſt* of his Miracles, Wherefore to ſhew what an *excellent* Proof of his Doctrine his *Reſurrection* was, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew that *Miracles* in general, and particularly *this* of Chriſt's *Reſurrection*, are the *beſt Evidences* of a *Divine Revelation*, that the Nature of the Thing will bear, and this I ſhall do, by ſhewing,

Firſt, That this is the moſt *proper* and *convenient* Evidence.

Secondly, That it is the moſt *certain* and *infallible*.

Thirdly, That it is the *plaineſt* and moſt *popular*.

Fourthly, That it is the *ſhorteſt* and moſt *compendious*.

I. *First*, That this Evidence of *Miracles* is the most *proper* and *convenient* to prove the *Truth* of any Pretence to *Revelation*: For as for the *intrinsick* Arguments drawn from the *Nature* and *Quality* of the *Revelation*, they may prove it indeed to be *wise*, and *good*, and *holy*, but how they should prove it to be immediately *revealed* from *God*, I cannot apprehend: For as for the moral Writings of the *Heathen Philosophers*, they were most of them very *good*, and *wise*, and *holy*; but yet it doth not hence follow, that the Authors of them were immediately *inspired* when they wrote them; notwithstanding their *Goodness*, they might be, and doubtless were, the Dictates of their own *natural Reason*, and so may any *other* Doctrine how *good* soever it be; and though the *Authors* of such Writings may *pretend* to be *inspired*, yet that is no Argument that they *are*. For all that I know, they may *pretend* to it, to give *Credit* to their *Doctrine*, or they may *think* themselves *inspired* when they are *not*; so that they have no *other* way to convince me that what they *pretend* is *true*, but only by giving me some certain *Sign* and *Token*, that they are *really* inspired from above; and no *Sign* can reasonably convince me of this, but such a one as I have reason to believe *God* alone did *enable* them to give me: for so long as I have just reason to suspect that the Sign which they give me was produced either by their *own Power*, or by the Power of some *other Agent* besides *God*; it is no *Sign* at all to me of their being *inspired* by God. *Miracles*, therefore, being the *only Signs* we can reasonably believe are produced by the *immediate Power* of *God*, 'tis *they* alone can indicate a Man's being immediately *inspired* by *God*. For how can I be assured, that what a Man saith is immediately *revealed* to him by *God*, unless *God* himself give me some *Sign* or *Token*, that he is so? And how can I know that *this* or *that* is a *Sign* or *Token* from *God*, unless it be something so *extraordinary* and *miraculous*, as that all Things considered, I may *reasonably* conclude 'twas *God* alone that produced it? I confess, indeed, a Miracle *singly* is not *sufficient* to demonstrate any Doctrine to be of *Divine Revelation*; for unless the Doctrine itself be *good*, at least unless it hath *no apparent* Evil in it, there is *no Miracle* whatsoever can prove it to be *Divine*. For there is no Argument in the World can persuade a reasonable Man to believe *God* against *himself*; but to believe a *bad Doctrine* to be the *Will of God*, because it is confirmed by *Miracle*, is to believe God's *Power* against his *Goodness*; and it is not more certain that God doth *will* what he *confirms* by Miracles, than that he *doth* not, *cannot* will *Iniquity*; nay, of the two, I should rather believe a *good Doctrine* to be from *God*, barely because it is *good*, than that a *bad* Doctrine is *so*, because it is confirmed by *Miracles*; it being more possible for a *wicked* Impostor to work a *Miracle*, than for a *holy God* to will *Sin*. But yet the *Goodness* of a Doctrine singly considered, and without the *Confirmation* of *Miracles*, is no *certain* Proof that 'tis of *Divine* Revelation. 'Tis true, those Things in any Doctrine which are *morally good*, and founded upon eternal *Reasons*, may be demonstrated true by *moral Arguments*, without any additional Confirmation by Miracles; but if the *Doctrine* contain in it any Proposition that is Matter of *pure Revelation*, and cannot be known without it, it is hardly possible to prove such a Doctrine *true* without producing some *miraculous* Sign of its *Truth* and *Divinity*. As for instance, how can a Man know that God hath appointed Jesus to be the *Mediator* between himself and us, which is Matter of *pure Revelation* wholly depending on the free-will of God, unless God *himself* gives us some *miraculous Sign*, by which we may know, that it is his *Will* and *Appointment*? And therefore we find, that there is no *Revelation* or *Pretence* of *Revelation*, but what lays claim to *this* Way of Confirmation. Thus the *Mosaick Religion* was confirmed by sundry great and stupendous *Miracles*, and even the *false Religion* of the Heathen *pretended* to *this* way of *Confirmation* also; for generally they established their superstitious Rites by *magical Tricks* and *Incantations*, they conjured their Dæmons into their consecrated Images, and made the *lifeless* Stocks to *move* and *speak*, they pretended to effect *extraordinary Cures* by the Invocation of their *Idols*, they often *raised* the Devils they adored by

their Charms and Inchantments, and made them appear in ſtrange *viſible Shapes*, to their *ſuperſtitious* Votaries, and by theſe and ſuch like *miraculous* Pretences, they introduced all their *idolatrous* Ceremonies; which is a plain Evidence, that they thought *Miracles* to be the moſt *proper* and *natural* Arguments of the *Truth* of any *Revelation*; and ſince the Thing is capable of no *better* way of *Demonſtration*, it is an unreaſonable thing not to be ſatiſfied with *this*; for he who will not *believe* that a thing which may be *is*, without an *impoſſible Proof* of its Exiſtence, is unreaſonably reſolved, right or wrong, not to believe it. So that *this* way of Chriſt's *proving* his *Doctrine* by his *Miracles*, and particularly by his *Reſurrection*, being the *beſt* and *moſt proper*; if we will not *believe* it upon this Evidence, we are *incurable Infidels*, whom *no Reaſon* in the World can *convince* or *perſuade*.

II. This Evidence of *Miracles* is the moſt *certain* and *infallible Medium* to prove the Truth of any Pretence to *Revelation*. For if God give a Man *Power* to do *Miracles*, in token that what he ſays is *true*, he thereby ſets his own *Seal* to the Truth of it; and if we are *ſatiſfied*, that the *Miracle* was wrought by the *Power* of God, and yet will not *belive* the *Doctrine* it ſeals, we do in effect give the *Lye* to God himſelf; for a real *Miracle* wrought to confirm a *Doctrine*, gives as great a *Certainty* of the *Truth* of that *Doctrine*, as we can have of the *Truth* of *God*, which is the *Foundation* of all the *Certainty* in the World; becauſe if once it be granted that *God* may work a *Miracle* to atteſt a *Lye*, we can have no Security of his *Truth*; but for all that we know, every thing that he ſaith or doth may be an *Impoſture*; and if ſo, for all we know, he may have *deceived* our *Faculties* too, and then there is *nothing* can be *certain* to us. The *Miracles* of Chriſt therefore, and eſpecially this of his *Reſurrection*, gives us as great *Certainty* of the *Truth* of his Doctrine, as we can have of any thing. For that he was *raiſed* by the Power of *God*, is evident, becauſe he was really *dead*, his Heart was pierced, and the vital Bonds were broken, which render'd him *utterly incapable* to raiſe *himſelf*; and ſuppoſing that there be ſome Agent in Nature *beſides* God, that was powerful enough to *raiſe* him, yet we are ſure the *Devil* would *not* do it, becauſe, as was ſhewn before, he muſt thereby do a thing infinitely *contrary* to his own *Temper*, and apparently *deſtructive* to his *Intereſt* and *Kingdom*; nor would any holy *Angel* have done it, without a ſpecial *Command* and *Commiſſion* from *God*, which is the ſame thing as if *God himſelf* had done it immediately. So that 'tis plain, Chriſt's *Reſurrection* muſt be effected either by the immediate *Will*, or by the immediate *Power* of God; and whether it was one way or t'other, 'twas a moſt *certain* Evidence of the *Truth* of his *Doctrine*; becauſe it cannot be imagined, that the *God of Truth* would either way have raiſed him from the *Dead*, had he been an *Impoſtor*, ſince in ſo doing, he muſt have taken the moſt effectual Courſe to impoſe a *Cheat* upon Mankind. For whilſt he was *alive* he promiſed to riſe again the *third Day*, and gave this as the great *Sign* to the *World*, whereby they ſhould know that he came from *God*; upon the hearing of which, all *unprejudiced* Minds (eſpecially conſidering the *Nature* of his *Doctrine*) had abundant Reaſon to conclude thus with themſelves, If this Man make *good* his Word, we can no longer doubt, but that he was ſent from *God*; for to be ſure, he *cannot riſe*, unleſs *God raiſe* him, and it can never enter into our *Thoughts*, that the *God of Truth* will raiſe him, on purpoſe to *delude* and *deceive us*. When therefore *he* was *actually riſen*, they could not, without being guilty of the moſt unreaſonable *Obſtinacy*, make any father *Scruple* of his *Truth* and *Veracity*.

There was about Six hundred Years ago, a certain *Jew* called *El David*, who gave out that he was *Chriſt*, and drew a great many Proſelytes after him, upon which he was apprehended, and brought before an *Arabian* Prince, who aſked him what *Miracle* he could do, to convince him that he was not an *Impoſtor?* To which he anſwer'd, *Sir, Cut off my Head, and in a little Time you ſhall ſee me alive again:* Which he ſaid, to prevent ſome greater Torments which he feared would be inflicted on him for deluding the People. Whereupon the

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Prince replied, *A greater Sign than this thou canst not give; and therefore if after I have beheaded thee thou recoverest to Life again, both I and all my People, and all the World sure, will acknowledge thee to be a Messenger from God.* And presently he commanded him to be beheaded, and there was an *end* of the *Cheat.* And so there would doubtless have been of the *Christian Religion,* if *Jesus* had *not* been *raised* from the *Dead*; for he said just as this *El David* did, Kill me, if you please, and when you have done so, you shall see I will live again; and upon *this* I stake all the *Credit* of my Doctrine. And therefore since it *came to pass* according to *his Word,* we have all the Reason in the World to resolve, with that *Arabian* Prince, to *believe* and *acknowledge* him to be *sent* from *God:* For, if there be a *God* that loves *Sincerity* and *Truth,* as we are sure there is; we are equally sure he will not *conspire* with an *Impostor* to *cheat* and *delude* the World; and yet this he must have done, had *Jesus* been a *Deceiver,* when *he* fulfilled this *miraculous Sign* of his *Resurrection,* upon which he suspended all the *Credit* of his *Doctrine.* So that now we have the *same Certainty* of the *Truth* of our *Faith,* as we have of the *Truth* of our *Knowledge*; for the *Truth* of our *Knowledge* supposes, that there is a *God,* whose *Goodness* will not suffer us to be *deceived* in those Things which we *clearly apprehend*; and the *Truth* of our *Faith* supposes, that there is a *God* whose *Goodness* will not suffer *him* to *deceive us* in such Things as he hath given us *sufficient* Reason to *believe:* For he who gives me a *sufficient* Reason to induce me to *believe* a *false* Proposition, is guilty of *seducing* me into a *false Belief*; and therefore, since God, in *raising* Christ from the Dead, hath given us a *sufficient* Argument to induce us to *believe* that *he sent* him, it necessarily follows, either that *he did send him,* or that he is guilty of *deceiving* and *abusing* us.

III. This Evidence of *Miracles* is the *plainest* and *most popular* to confirm a *Revelation.* If the Principles of *revealed Religion* were to be proved by *natural Reason* and *Philosophy,* the Arguments of it would be too *thin* and *subtile* for vulgar Capacities, and Men would never be fit to be catechized into their Religion, till they had been train'd up in the *Schools,* and there instructed in the *Intrigues* of *Logick* and *Discourse*; for the generality of Men are *capable* of no other Notices of Things but what are immediately impress'd upon them by the *Objects* of *Sense*; nor have they *Skill* enough so exactly to compare simple *Terms,* as to connect them into true *Propositions,* and from these to deduce their true and natural *Consequences.* These are Things that require far more *Leisure* and *Skill* than Mens Education and Affairs will ordinarily afford them: So that had there not been some *plainer* and *easier* Way found out, to prove the *Truth* of *Christianity* than this, it had been a Religion fit only for the *Schools* of *Philosophers*; and the *Vulgar,* who are not *capable* of *close* and *strict* Discourse, and have neither *Time* nor *Skill* enough to trace the *Footsteps* of *Truth* through all the *Intricacies* of *Reasoning* and *Discourse,* must have been damned to eternal *Infidelity.* And this, without doubt, was one main Reason why the *moral Philosophy* of the *Heathen* had so *little* Influence upon the People; because the Arguments by which its Principles were proved and demonstrated, were too *fine* and *subtile* for *vulgar* Apprehensions; insomuch that there were but *few,* in comparison, that could *comprehend* the *Strength* and *Force* of them: And in all probability, as little Effect would *Christianity* have found in the World, had it not been proved and demonstrated by *such Evidence* as is adapted to all *Capacities*; as for instance, the *Immortality* of the *Soul* is one *great* Principle of the *Christian Religion*; but now, had we no *other* way of *proving* this Principle than by *Philosophical* Arguments, how impossible would it have been to *convince* the *Vulgar* of the *Truth* of it? For, first we must have proved that the Soul is *immaterial,* by shewing that its Operations, such as *Free-will* and *Reflection,* are *incompetent* with *Matter*; from hence we must have inferr'd, that it is *immortal,* by shewing that what is *immaterial* hath no quantitative *Extension,* and consequently is incapable of *Division* and *Corruption.* Now, I beseech you, what *Jargon,* what *unintelligible* Gibberish would this appear to *vulgar* Understandings? What an *insignificant Noise* would such *fine* Speculations make in the Ears of an honest *Plowman?* But now the *miraculous Resurrection* of our Saviour is so plain

and

and *intelligible* a Proof of it, that every Man may apprehend the Force of it, that hath the free Use of his own Faculties: For it is but arguing thus, and the thing is clearly prov'd; *Christ* told the World, whilst he was alive, that the *Soul* is *immortal*, and that there are *everlasting* Habitations of *Weal* or *Woe* prepared for her in another World; and in token that what he said was *true*, he promised that the third Day after his *Death* he would *rise* again, which he could *never* have verified, had not *God* given him *power* to do it; and to be sure *God* would *never* have given him this *Power*, had not his Saying been true: Wherefore, since *God* did *impower* him to rise again, it is plain that he thereby *approved* the *Truth* of his Saying, and *justified* his *Doctrine* to the World. This is such a *plain* and *intelligible* way of arguing, that the *shallowest* Minds may easily *apprehend* the Force of it; wherefore, since God designed *Christianity* to be a Religion as well for the *Vulgar*, as for the more *refined* and *elevated* Understandings, it was highly reasonable that the way of proving its Principles should be *plain* and *intelligible* to all *Capacities* of Men.

IV. And *lastly*, This Evidence of *Miracles* is the most *short* and *compendious* way of proving the *Truth* of *Revelation*. One Reason why the *moral Philosophy* of the *Heathen* had so *little* Influence on the *Vulgar*, was, because their Way of proving the Principles of it was so *long* and *tedious*; for they were fain to prove them by Parcels; and when they had convinced their Auditors of the Truth of one *Proposition*, they proceeded to another; and so they were fain to prove them all *singly* and *apart* by *distinct* and *different* Arguments; which was so *tedious* a way, that the *Vulgar* had not *Leisure* enough to attend so great a *Variety* of Reasonings, nor yet *Capacity* enough to retain them: But he that works a real *Miracle*, in token that such a Doctrine is true, proves it all at *once*, and needs not trouble himself to demonstrate *one Proposition* after *another*: for by giving a *miraculous* Sign of the *Truth* of such a *Doctrine*, God doth openly approve *every* Proposition contained in it; because it cannot be supposed, that the God of *Truth* would approve any Doctrine in the *Gross*, if any *Part* or *Proposition* of it had been *false*, since in so doing he must necessarily have *abused* our Understandings, and wittingly *betrayed* us into a *false* Belief; which to affirm of *God*, is equally *absurd* and *blasphemous*. When therefore God *raised* our Saviour from the Dead, he did by that one Act openly avow the *Truth* of his *whole Doctrine*, and proclaim to all the World, that *every Article* in it is as *true* as *Truth* itself. So that now we need not trouble ourselves to hunt out for *several Arguments* to prove the *several Articles* of our Faith; for this *one* Argument serves instead of all, That God, by *sundry Miracles*, and particularly by *raising* Jesus from the Dead, hath given *Testimony*, that the *Doctrine* which he taught is a *true Revelation* of his *Mind* and *Will* to the World. And thus you see what a *clear* and *excellent* Evidence Christ's *Miracles*, and especially his *Resurrection*, is of the *Truth* of his *Doctrine*: No wonder therefore that the Apostle doth so much prefer it above all *other* Evidence, as we find he doth, 1 *Cor.* ii. 4. *For*, saith he, *my Speech and my Teaching was not with the enticing Words of Man's Wisdom, but in Demonstration of Spirit and Power*; that is, I did not go about to convince ye with *Rhetorical* Harangues, or *fine Philosophical* Reasonings, but I clearly demonstrated the *Truth* of what I *preached* by the *Miracles*, which, through the Power of the Divine Spirit, I wrought amongst you. So that whether we consider the *Certainty* of Christ's *Miracles*, but especially of his *Resurrection*, or the powerful *Evidence* which they give to his *Doctrine*, I doubt not but upon an impartial View of the Whole, it will appear, that we have all the Reason in the World *firmly* to *assent* to the *Truth* of *Christianity*; and consequently to this Article which comprehends it all, that *Jesus Christ is the Mediator between God and Man.*

N. B. *The forgoing* CHAPTER *was Intitled*, The CHRISTIAN LIFE. Part II. Vol. II. *in the* Octavo *Editions.*

NOTES.

NOTES.

PAGE 339. Line 15. *(a)* For thus *Tertullian*, *Hunc* (i.e. τὸ λόγον) *Zeno determinat factitorem, qui cuncta in diſpoſitione formaverit, eundemque & Fatum vocari, & Deum, & animum Jovis. Apologet.* 36. Pam. *i. e.* This Word, *Zeno* declares to be the Maker of the World, who formed all Things in a due Temper, and is called Fate, and God, and the Soul of *Jupiter*. And the ancient *Orpheus* calls him the λόγον θεῖον, and the ἄνακτα ἀθάνατον, *i. e.* the divine Word, and immortal King, *Clem. Strom l.* 5. *p.* 607. So alſo *Numenius* the *Pythagorean*, as he is quoted by St. *Cyril*, *contra Jul. l.* 8. calls the Father the *firſt*, and the Word the *ſecond* God. So alſo *Plotinus*, *Enn.* 5. *l.* 5. *c.* 3. καὶ θεὸς αὕτη ἡ φύσις, (ſpeaking of this Divine νοῦς or λόγος) καὶ θεὸς δεύτερος, *i. e.* and this Nature is God, a ſecond God. And as for the *Jews*, it is evident from the Septuagint, and *Philo*, and the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe, that by the Word they meant a divine Perſon; for *Ezek.* i. 24. the Septuagint hath changed *ſhaddai*, the undoubted Name of the Omnipotent God, into λόγος, the Word; which to be ſure they would not have done, had they not thought this Word a divine Perſon: And then as for *Philo* the *Jew*, who lived in the Age when this Goſpel was written, he expreſsly calls this Word δεύτερον θεὸν, next to the Πατέρα τῶν πάντων, *i. e.* a ſecond God next to the Father of all Things, *Quaeſt. & Solut.* And elſewhere he tells us, Ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ὑπεράνω παντός ἐστι τοῦ κόσμου καὶ πρεσβύτατος καὶ γενικώτατος τῶν ὅσα γέγονε. The Word is ſuperior to the whole World, and more ancient and general than any thing that is made, *Leg. Allegor. lib.* 2. And again, ſpeaking of the World's being the Temple of God, Ἐν ᾧ, ſaith he, καὶ ἀρχιερεὺς ὁ πρωτόγονος αὐτοῦ θεῖος λόγος, *i. e.* in which Temple the High-Prieſt is the firſt-born Divine Word of God, *de Somn* And in his Book *de Profug* he thus diſcourſes of this Word, Ὁ δ' ὑπεράνω τούτων λόγος θεῖος, εἰς ὁρατὴν οὐκ ἦλθεν ἰδέαν, ἅτε μηδενὶ τῶν κατ' αἴσθησιν ἐμφερὴς ὤν, ἀλλ' αὐτὸς εἰκὼν ὑπάρχων θεοῦ, τῶν νοητῶν ἁπαξαπάντων ὁ πρεσβύτατος, ὁ ἐγγυτάτω, μηδενὸς ὄντος μεθορίου διαστήματος, τοῦ μόνου ὅ ἐστιν ἀψευδῶς ἀφιδρυμένος, *i. e.* This divine Word is ſuperior to all Things, it hath no viſible Species by which it may be likened to any ſenſible Thing, but is itſelf the Image of God, the moſt ancient of all Intelligibles, and next to the moſt High, between whom and him there is no *Medium*. A great many other Inſtances I could give out of this ancient Writer, but theſe are ſufficient to prove what I intend, *viz.* That by the Word, he meant a divine Perſon. And then for the *Chaldee* Paraphaſe, which is one of the moſt ancient Monuments we have of *Jewiſh* Learning, there is nothing more frequent in it than to ſignify by this Phraſe *the Word*, a divine Perſon; for inſtead of *Jehovah* or *God*, in the *Hebrew* Text they commonly inſert, *the Word of Jehovah*, to which Word they attribute perſonal Actions, by which it is evident, that they looked upon it as a divine Perſon; thus, for Inſtance, they attribute Speech to him, *Gen.* iii. 22. where inſtead of *God ſaid*, they render it, *the Word of God ſaid*; *Exod.* xx 1. inſtead of *the Lord ſaid*, they render it, *the Word of the Lord ſaid*. Again they attribute Hearing to him, *Deut.* xxxiii. 7. where inſtead of *the Lord heard*, they inſert, *the Word of the Lord heard*. And *Gen.* iii. 22. inſtead of *the Lord ſaid, behold the Man is become as one of us*; the *Jeruſalem Targum* runs thus, *the Word of the Lord ſaid, Behold* Adam *whom I created, is the only begotten in the World, even as I am the only begotten in the higheſt Heavens*. And *Exod* xix. 3. Inſtead of *Moſes went up unto God*, in the *Edit. Compluten.* it is, Moſes *went up into the Preſence of the Word of God*. So alſo in *Exod.* xvii. 7. inſtead of *I will eſtabliſh my Covenant between me and thee*, it is, *I will eſtabliſh my Covenant between my Word and thee*. Again, *Gen.* xix. 24. the Paraphraſe is, *And the Word of* Jehovah *ſent benign Showers upon* Sodom *and* Gomorrha, *to try them if they would yet repent of their evil Works; which when they ſaw, they concluded, doubtleſs our evil Works are not yet revealed before the Lord, wherefore there was ſent down upon them a Shower of Fire and Brimſtone from the Word of* Jehovah *in Heaven*. So alſo on *Gen.* xxviii. 20, 21. *Onkelos* thus paraphraſeth, *If the Word of the Lord will be my helper, and lead me in the Way which I go, the Word of the Lord ſhall be my God*. And on *Gen.* v. 24. the *Jeruſalem Targum* expreſsly aſſerts, that *Enoch* was drawn up to Heaven by the Word of the Lord. And alſo on *Gen.* xxii. 14 the ſame Paraphraſe affirms thus, that *Abraham worſhipped and called upon the Name of the Word of* Jehovah, *and ſaid, thou art* Jehovah, &c. And on *Deut.* xviii. 19. thus both *Onkelos* and *Jonathan* paraphraſe, *He that refuſes to hearken to my Words, my Word ſhall take Vengeance upon him*. And to name no more, on thoſe Words of the *Hebrew* Text, *Hoſ.* xiv. 5. *I will be as the Dew of Iſrael*; *Jonathan* thus deſcants, *I, by my Word, will receive their Prayers, and have Mercy on them*. A great many other Inſtances I could give, but theſe I think are ſufficient, to expoſe the great Immodeſty of *Crellius*, who, in a ſet Diſcourſe, will needs perſuade the World, that by the Word, in the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe is no where meant a Perſon, but merely the Speech or vocal Word of God: For how is it imaginable that by this Word they ſhould mean no more than that, when they ſo commonly attribute to it perſonal Actions, ſuch as ſpeaking, hearing, ſeeing and deſiring; drawing up Men to Heaven, raining down Fire and Brimſtone from Heaven, and taking Vengeance upon Men? With what tolerable Propriety can theſe Things be attributed to a vocal Word? How can a Covenant be made between Man and the outward Speech or Declaration of God? What Nonſenſe would it be to worſhip and invocate the Name of God's vocal Word, and to ſay of it, thou art *Jehovah*? With what tolerable Senſe can God's Declaration be called God, or God's only begotten in Heaven? *Laſtly*, How can God be ſaid to receive our Prayers, and to have Mercy upon us by any ſuch outward Declaration? Since therefore it is evident, that by this Word they meant a Perſon, and ſince to this Perſon they aſcribe not only the Name, but the Worſhip of God, it is plain, they believed him to be a divine Perſon; and that which is the Senſe of this ancient Paraphraſe in this Matter, was without doubt the Senſe of the *Jews*, in the Age wherein it was written. And accordingly *Chalcidius ad Timaeum*, in that Book where he profeſſes to explain the Doctrines of the holy Sect, *i. e.* the *Jews*, delivers this as their Senſe of this divine Word, *Et ratio Dei Deus eſt humanis rebus conſulens quae cauſa eſt hominibus bene beatéque vivendi, ſi non conceſſum ſibi munus à ſummo Deo negligant, i. e.* This *Logos*, or Word of God, is God taking Care of humane Affairs, and is the Cauſe or Principle by which Men may live well and happily, if they do not neglect this Gift which the ſupreme God hath granted to them. And to the ſame Purpoſe *Celſus*, ſpeaking the Senſe of the *Jews*, expreſsly tells us, Εἴγε ὁ λόγος ἐστὶν ὑμῖν υἱὸς Θεοῦ καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐπαινοῦμεν, *i. e.* We agree with you, that the Word is the Son of God.

Page 339. *Line* 15. *(b)* Nay, and that by this Word, the *Jews* mean, not only a real and divine Perſon, but even that very *Meſſias* himſelf, of whom St. *John* here ſpeaks, is evident, conſidering that they

they not only give him the very ſame Characters that the New Teſtament gives to our Saviour, ſuch as the Χαρακτὴρ Θεοῦ, the Character of God, *Phil. de Agricul. lib.* 2. and Εἰκόνα Θεοῦ, the Image of God, *Leg. All. Lib.* 2. ſuitable to *Heb.* i. 3. ſuch as the Manna, the ἄρτος and τροφὴ ἣν ἔδωκε ὁ Θεὸς τῇ ψυχῇ, the Bread and Food which God hath given to the Soul, agreeable to *John* vi. 33, 35. ſuch as the Πατρὸς δὲ οἶκος ἐν ᾧ διαιτᾶται, the Houſe of the Father in which he dwells, *ib. de Migrat. Abraham*, ſuitable to *John* xiv. 10. but beſides this, I ſay, they alſo attribute to him the very ſame Offices which the New Teſtament attributes to our Saviour; for thus as the Scripture attributes unto Chriſt a kingly Office under God the Father, ſo they make this θεῖος λόγος, or divine Word, the ὁ πηδαλιοῦχος καὶ κυβερνήτης τοῦ παντὸς, *i. e.* the Governor of all Things, and the ὕπαρχος τοῦ μεγάλου βασιλέως, the Viceroy of the great King, *Ib. de Som. & de Agricul. l.* 2. where he alſo tells us, That God, who is King and Paſtor of the World, hath appointed the Word his firſt-begotten Son, τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν τῆς ἱερᾶς ἀγέλης οἷάτε μεγάλου βασιλέως ὕπαρχος διαδέξασθαι, to undertake the Care of his ſacred Flock, as his own Viceroy and Subſtitute; and ſo alſo as the Scripture attributes to Chriſt the Office of an Interceſſor between God and Man; ſo alſo the ſame Author tells us, which is highly worthy our Obſervation, Τῷ δὲ ἀρχαγγέλῳ καὶ πρεσβυτάτῳ λόγῳ, δωρεὰν ἐξαίρετον ἔδωκεν ὁ τὰ ὅλα γεννήσας πατὴρ, ἵνα μεθόριος στὰς τὸ γενόμενον διακρίνῃ τοῦ πεποιηκότος· ὁ δὲ αὐτὸς ἱκέτης μέν ἐστι τοῦ θνητοῦ κηραίνοντος ἀεὶ πρὸς ἄφθαρτον, πρεσβευτὴς δὲ τοῦ ἡγεμόνος πρὸς τὸ ὑπήκοον· ἀγάλλεται ἐπὶ τῇ δωρεᾷ, καὶ σεμνυνόμενος αὐτὴν ἐκδιηγεῖται, φάσκων, κἀγὼ εἱστήκειν ἀνὰ μέσον κυρίου καὶ ὑμῶν, οὔτε ἀγέννητος ὡς ὁ Θεὸς ὢν, οὔτε γεννητὸς ὡς ὑμεῖς, ἀλλὰ μέσος τῶν ἄκρων ἀμφοτέροις ὁμηρεύων· παρὰ μὲν τῷ φυτεύσαντι, πρὸς πίστιν τοῦ μὴ σύμπαν ἀφανίσαι ποτὲ καὶ ἀποστῆναι τὸ γένος, ἀκοσμίαν ἀντὶ κόσμου ἑλόμενον, παρὰ δὲ τῷ φυτῷ, πρὸς εὐελπιστίαν τοῦ μήποτε, τὸν ἵλεων Θεὸν περιιδεῖν τὸ ἴδιον ἔργον, ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐπικηρυκεύσομαι τὰ εἰρηναῖα γενέσει παρὰ τοῦ καθαιρεῖν πολέμους ἐγνωκότος εἰρηνοφύλακος ἀεὶ Θεοῦ· *i. e.* But this excellent Gift the Father of all Things hath beſtowed upon the Prince of Angels, the moſt ancient Word, that ſtanding in the Middle, he might judge between the Creature and Creator; and he always ſupplicates the immortal God for Mortals, and is the Embaſſador from the ſupreme King to his Subjects, and in this Gift he rejoices, as highly valuing himſelf upon it, ſaying, I ſtood in the Middle between you and the Lord, as being neither unbegotten as God, nor yet begotten as you, but am a Middle between the Extremes, and a Pledge for both; for the Creature with the Creator, that he ſhall not wholly apoſtatize from him, ſo as to prefer Diſorder before Order and Beauty; for the Creator with the Creature, to give him an aſſured hope, that the moſt merciful God will never abandon his own Workmanſhip; for I declare Peace to the Creature from him who makes Wars to ceaſe, even God, who is the King of Peace. In which Words the ſame mediatorial Office, which the New Teſtament attributes to our Saviour, is expreſsly attributed to this divine *Logos*. And in the above-cited Book *de Agricult.* he expreſsly teaches, that this *Logos*, or divine Word, was that Angel whom God had promiſed to ſend before the Camp of *Iſrael*; of which Angel, *Moſes Gerund.* as he is quoted by *Maſius* upon *Joſhua, chap.* 5. thus ſpeaks, *Ille angelus, ſi rem ipſam dicam, eſt Angelus Redemptor, de quo ſcriptum eſt, Quoniam nomen meum in ipſo eſt, ille inquam Angelus qui ad Jacob dicebat, Ego Deus Bethel; ille de quo dictum eſt, & vocabat Moſem Deus de rubo: Vocatur autem Angelus quia mundum gubernat, ſcriptum eſt enim, Eduxit nos Jehovah (id eſt Dominus Deus) ex Ægypto: & alibi, miſit Angelum ſuum & eduxit nos ex Ægypto. Præterea ſcriptum eſt, Et Angelus faciei ejus ſalvos fecit ipſos: De quo dictum eſt, Facies mea præibit & efficiam ut quieſcat; denique ille Angelus eſt de quo vates, Et ſubito veniet ad templum ſuum Dominus quem vos quæritis & Angelus fœderis quem cupitis:* That Angel, to ſpeak the Truth, is the Angel Redeemer, of whom it is written, *Becauſe my Name is in him*; this, I ſay, is that Angel, who ſaid unto *Jacob*, *I am the God of Bethel*; he is alſo that Angel, of whom it is ſaid, *And God called to Moſes out of the Buſh*; for he is called the Angel, becauſe he governs the World; wherefore it is written *Jehovah, i. e.* the Lord God, *brought us out of Egypt*; and elſewhere, *he ſent his Angel, and brought us out of Egypt*; beſides, it is written, *and the Angel of his Face ſaved them.* Of this Angel it is alſo ſaid, *My Preſence ſhall go before the Camp of* Iſrael, *and ſhall cauſe it to reſt. Laſtly,* This is the Angel of whom the Prophet ſpeaks, *The Lord whom ye ſeek ſhall ſuddenly come to his Temple, the Angel of the Covenant whom ye deſire.* By which laſt Paſſage, it is evident, that by this Angel he meant the *Meſſias*, to whom all the ancient *Jews* refer that Prophecy; ſo that the divine Word, according to *Philo*, is the Angel that went before the Camp of *Iſrael*, and that Angel, according to *Moſes Gerundenſis*, is no other than the *Meſſias*: And that *Philo* himſelf by this *Word*, underſtood the *Meſſias*, is evident by his applying thoſe Words, *Ezek.* vi. 12. (which the ancient *Jews* unanimouſly underſtood of the *Meſſias*) to him in *lib. quod Deter. potiorib. inſid. ſoleat.* But to put all out of doubt, the *Targums* uſe the *Word of the Lord*, and the *Meſſias* promiſcuouſly; for ſo on thoſe Words, *Gen.* xlix. 18. *I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord*; the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe thus deſcants, Our Father *Jacob* ſaid, I expect not the Salvation of *Gideon* the Son of *Joas*, which is a temporal Salvation; nor the Salvation of *Sampſon* the Son of *Manoah*, which is a tranſitory Salvation; but I expect the Redemption of Meſſias the Son of *David*, who ſhall come and gather together the Sons of *Iſrael*, his Redemption my Soul expects: with which the *Jeruſalem Targum* concurs almoſt Word for Word, only with this Difference, that inſtead of thoſe Words, *But I expect the Redemption of Meſſias the Son of David*, it hath theſe Words, *But I expect the Redemption which thou haſt promiſed to give us by thy Word, that he ſhould come to thy People Iſrael*; which is a plain Evidence, that by the *Meſſias* and this *Word*, they meant the ſame Thing; ſo alſo on thoſe Words, *Even I am he, and there is no God beſides me*; *I kill, and I make alive*; *I wound, and I heal*; *Jonathan*'s *Targum* runs thus, *When* the Word of the Lord ſhall be manifeſted to redeem his People, he (*i. e.* the Word of the Lord) ſhall ſay to all the People, ſee now, becauſe I am he who was, and is to come, and there is no other God beſides me; I kill in my Revenge, and reviving, do revive the People of the Houſe of *Iſrael*; I will heal them in the laſt Days; by which *laſt Days* is evidently meant the Days of the Meſſias, who therefore muſt be the ſame with this *Word of the Lord* here ſpoken of.

Page 339. *Line* 24.] (*c*) For as they affirm of their Word, that he is ἄχρονος καὶ ἀεὶ μόνος αἰώνιος, *i. e.* always without Time, and alone eternal; vide *Porphyry* quoted by St. *Cyril. C. Jul. lib.* 1. *p.* 32. that he is πρεσβύτατος Θεοῦ λόγος, the moſt ancient Word of God, *Phil. de Somn.* and πρεσβύτατος τῶν ὅσα γέγονε, the moſt ancient of all Things that are, *ib. Leg. Allegor. lib.* 2. So St. *John* affirms of his Word, that he was *in the beginning*, that is, according to the plaineſt and moſt obvious Senſe at leaſt, and that he actually exiſted in the very beginning of the World, and that conſequently he was before all Time, and the moſt ancient of all Things. Again, as they affirm of their Word, that it is not ſeparated from the firſt Good or Father, ἀλλ' ἐξ ἀνάγκης σύνεστιν αὐτῷ, ὡς τῇ ἑτερότητι μόνον κεχωρίσθαι, *i. e.* but of neceſſity is together with him, being ſeparated from him only in Perſonality, *Plot. En.* 5. *l.* 1. *c.* 6. So St. *John* affirms of his Word, That it *was with God from the Beginning*, v. 2. that is, in an inſeparable Union and Conjunction; for otherwiſe, all other Things were as much with God as he. Again, as they affirm of their Word, That he is αἴτιον καὶ δημιουργὸς, the Cauſe or Artificer of the World; for ſo all

the *Platonick* Schools frequently style him; and so *Plato* himself, ὃν (*i. e.* κόσμον) ἔταξε λόγος ὁ πάντων θειότατος, *i. e.* which World the Word, which of all Things is the most divine, framed and set in order; *Epinom.* and *Philo* call him, ὄργανον Θεοῦ, δι' οὗ ὁ κόσμος κατεσκευάσθη, the Instrument by whom God made the World; *Phil. Lib. Chereb.* So St. *John* affirms of his Word, That *all Things were made by him, and without him was not any Thing made that was made,* ℣. 3. Again, as they affirm of their Word, that he is τὸ ὄν, *i. e.* if I may coin a Word, the *Be-er*; and that this *Be-er*, οὐ νεκρόν, οὐδὲ οὐ ζωή, οὐδὲ οὐ νοῦν, νοῦς δὲ καὶ ζωὴ, καὶ ὂν ταὐτὸν, *i. e.* is not a dead *Be-er*, that is, neither Life nor Mind; but that Mind and Life and *Be-er* are the same Thing, *Plotin. Enn.* 5. *l.* 1. *c.* 2. So St. *John* affirms of his Word, That *in him was Life,* ℣. 4. As they affirm, that the Life or Being of their Word was Knowledge or Understanding, οὐδὲ γὰρ νοῦν οὕτως δυνάμει, οὐδὲ ἕτερος μὲν αὐτὸς, ἡ δὲ νόησις ἄλλο, *i. e.* neither is this Mind or Word *in Potentia*; neither is itself one thing, and its Knowledge another, but its Knowledge is itself, or its own Being, *ibid. l.* 3. *c.* 5. So St. *John* affirms of his Word, That *his Life was the Light of Men, i. e.* that it consisted of Knowledge, which is the Light of human Minds, ℣. 4. As they affirm, that the φῶς τὸ νοητὸν, *i. e.* intelligible Light proceeded ἐκ λόγου, from the Word, *Phil. de Opif. mund.* and that πᾶν φῶς ἐστιν ἐξ αὐτῆς, *i. e.* that all Light is from this Word or Wisdom, *Arist. apud Euseb. prap p.* 324. So St. *John* tells us of his Word, that he was the true Light which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World, ℣. 9. In short, as they style their Word υἱὸν Θεοῦ, *i. e.* the Son of God, *Plot. Enn.* 5. *l.* 8. *c.* 5. And again, παῖδα Θεοῦ, νοῦν κόρον καλὸν, καὶ παρ' αὐτοῦ γινόμενον κόρον, *i. e* the Son or Child of God, the full beautiful Mind, even the Mind that is full of God; as also πρεσβύτατον υἱὸν ὁ τῶν ὅλων ἀνέτειλε πατὴρ, *i. e.* the most ancient Son of the Father of the Universe, *Phil. l. cui Tit. Deterius perfectiori semper infestum esse.* And also Πρωτόγονον υἱὸν Θεοῦ, *i. e.* the First-born Son of God, *Ib. lib.* 1. *de Agricult.* So St. *John* styles his Word the only begotten Son of the Father, ℣. 14. 18. Thus from first to last, St. *John* discourses of his Word, and in the same Phrase and Language gives the same Account of him as the Jewish and Gentile Divines did of theirs; so that he must be supposed either to mean the same thing by him, *viz.* a divine eternal Person, or to design to make the World believe he meant so; for he who speaks or writes must either equivocate and dissemble his Meaning, or mean according to the vulgar Acceptation of the Words or Phrases he speaks or writes: So that supposing St. *John* doth here sincerely express his own Meaning, no Man that understands the common Use and Acceptation of his Phrases, can reasonably understand them any otherwise than of a divine Person; and whether this were not his Meaning, at least in all Appearance, I appeal to a very indifferent Judge, *viz. Amelius*, a Pagan Philosopher, who very well understood the Language and Doctrine of the Gentile Schools, concerning the divine *Logos* or Word, so often mentioned in their Writings, and who casting his Eyes upon this Discourse of St. *John* doth with all Confidence pronounce this to be the Sense of them, οὗτος ἄρα ἦν ὁ λόγος, καθ' ὃν αἰεὶ ὄντα, τὰ γινόμενα ἐγίνετο, ὡς ἂν καὶ ὁ Ἡράκλειτος ἀξιώσειε, καὶ νὴ Δί' ὃν ὁ βάρβαρος ἀξιοῖ ἐν τῇ τῆς ἀρχῆς τάξει τε καὶ ἀξίᾳ καθεστηκότα, πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν εἶναι, καὶ Θεὸν εἶναι δι' οὗ πάνθ' ἁπλῶς γεγενῆσθαι, ἐν ᾧ τὸ γινόμενον ζῶν καὶ ὂν πεφυκέναι, *i. e.* this was that Word who, according to *Heraclitus*, existed from Eternity, and made all Things, and whom, by *Jupiter*, the *Barbarian* places in the Order and Dignity of a Principal, declaring him to have been with God, and to be God, and that all Things were made by him, and that in him all Things that were had Life and Being. *Vide Euseb. Prap. Evan.* 450.

Page 345. *Line* 15.] (*d*) For thus *Porphyry*, as St. *Cyril* quotes him, Ἄχρι τριῶν ὑποστάσεων τὴν θείαν προελθεῖν οὐσίαν, εἶναι δὲ τὸν μὲν ἀνωτάτω Θεὸν, τὸ ἀγαθὸν, μετ' αὐτὸν δὲ καὶ δεύτερον τὸν δημιουργὸν, τρίτην δὲ καὶ τὴν τοῦ κόσμου ψυχὴν, ἄχρι γὰρ ψυχῆς τὴν θειότητα προελθεῖν, *i. e.* the divine Essence extends itself to three Persons, whereof the highest God is the Good; after him the Second is the Maker of the World; and the third is the Soul of the World; for to this Soul the divine Essence extends itself. And of these three divine Persons *Plotinus* hath treated at large, whom he expresly calls, Τρεῖς Ἀρχικὰς ὑποστάσεις, three Persons that are Principals, *viz.* the Good or the One, the Mind and the Soul; assuring us, that these Doctrines concerning this divine Trinity, Μὴ καινὰς, μηδὲ νῦν, ἀλλὰ πάλαι μὲν εἰρῆσθαι μὴ ἀναπεπταμένως, τοὺς δὲ νῦν λόγους ἐξηγητὰς ἐκείνων γεγονέναι μαρτυρίοις πιστωσαμένους τὰς δόξας ταύτας παλαιὰς εἶναι τοῖς αὐτοῦ τοῦ Πλάτωνος γράμμασιν ἥπτετο μὲν οὖν καὶ Παρμενίδης πρότερον τῆς τοιαύτης δόξης, *i. e.* that they were not new, or of yesterday, but were anciently, though obscurely taught; and that what is now discoursed concerning them, is only a farther explication of them; but we have faithful Witnesses that these Doctrines were taught of old, and particularly in the Writings of *Plato* himself, before whom also *Parmenides* deliver'd them. And indeed *Plato* very frequently mentions these three divine Persons; particularly, *Phileb. p.*30. Σοφία μὲν καὶ νοῦς ἄνευ ψυχῆς οὐκ ἄν ποτε γενοίσθην· οὐκοῦν ἐν μὲν τῇ τοῦ Διὸς ἐρεῖς φύσει βασιλικὴν μὲν ψυχὴν, βασιλικὸν δὲ νοῦν ἐγγίγνεσθαι, *i. e.* but Wisdom and Mind can never be or act without Soul, where in the Nature of God there is a kingly Soul, and kingly Mind. And indeed so ancient is this Doctrine of three divine Persons subsisting in the Godhead, that *Proclus* calls it, ἡ τῶν τριῶν Θεῶν παράδοσις, the Tradition of the three Gods, in *Tima. Plat. p.* 93. for so they sometimes call these three Persons three Gods, tho' as themselves elsewhere explain it, they are three only Subsistences in the same indivisible Essence. And the same *Proclus* calls this Doctrine of the Trinity Θεοπαράδοτος θεολογία, which saith he, φησὶ συμπεπληρῶσθαι τὸν κόσμον ἐκ τῶν τῶνδε τριῶν, *i. e.* the divinely inspired or deliver'd Theology, which teaches that this World was compleated by these three. By these and sundry other Testimonies that might be produced, it is evident, that the ancient Divines of the *Gentiles* acknowledged a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, the last of which they called ψυχὴ, or Soul; for so the *Chaldee* Oracle quoted by the abovenamed *Proclus*,

Μετὰ δὲ πατρικὰς διανοίας,
Ψυχὴ ἐγὼ ναίω,

i. e. after the paternal Mind, which in our Language is God the Son, I *Psyche* or Soul dwell; and this *Psyche*, or, as our Scriptures phrase it, Holy Ghost, they style ψυχὴν θειοτάτην, the most divine *Psyche*, ἣν δὴ καὶ Θεὸν ἄν τις δικαίως οὐ δαίμονα εἴποι, *i. e.* whom we may truly say is God and not a Demon, *Plotin. Enn.* 3. *l.* 5. *c.* 2. and the same Author tells us of this *Psyche*, that it is λόγος τοῦ νοῦ καὶ ἡ ἐνέργειά τις, *i. e.* that it is the Word of the Mind or Son, as proceeding from him, and the energy or active Power by which he operates; all which exactly accords with the Catholick Doctrine concerning the Holy Ghost.

Page 345. *Line* 15.] (*e*) For so the above cited *Philo*, Ἡνίκα ὁ Θεὸς δορυφορούμενος ὑπὸ δυεῖν τῶν ἀνωτάτω δυνάμεων, ἀρχῆς τε αὖ καὶ ἀγαθότητος, εἷς ὢν ὁ μέσος τριττὰς φαντασίας ἐνειργάζετο τῇ ὁρατικῇ ψυχῇ, ὧν ἑκάστη μεμέτρηται μὲν οὐδαμῶς, ἀπερίγραφοι γὰρ αἱ δυνάμεις αὐτοῦ, μεμέτρηκε δὲ τὰ ὅλα, *i. e.* when God accompanied with his two highest Powers, *viz.* Empire and Goodness, the Middle being one, he impressed three *Phantasms* on the sensitive or visive Soul, *viz.* of *Abraham*, each of which exceed all measure; for these his Powers are all immense, but themselves measure all Things, *De Sacrif. Abel & Cain.* Now, that

that by these Powers, he means the second and third Person in the Tri-une Godhead is apparent, because he afterwards calls God and these his Powers, *τρία μέτρα*, the three Measures, and tells us, *τὸν Θεὸν ἀνωτάτω εἶναι ὃς ὑπερέχει τὰς δυνάμεις αὐτοῦ, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτῶν ὁρώμενος, καὶ ἐν ταύταις ἐμφαινόμενος*, *i. e.* that the supreme God is superiour to these Powers of his, and is to be seen without them, and appears in them;. which plainly shews, that by these two Powers he means some Things that are really distinct from that God whose Powers they were; and therefore since before he had told us that they were both immense, what else can he mean by them but those two divine Persons, the Son and the Spirit of God? To the same purpose he discourses, *Lib. de Cherub.* where after he had given some uncertain Guesses at the mystical Sense of those Cherubs that guarded Paradise, he thus concludes, *ἤκουσα δέ ποτε καὶ σπουδαιοτέρου λόγου παρὰ ψυχῆς ἐμῆς, εἰωθυίας τὰ πολλὰ θεοληπτεῖσθαι, καὶ περὶ ὧν οὐκ οἶδε μαντεύεσθαι, ὃν ἐὰν δύνωμαι ἀπομνημονεύσας ἐρῶ*; *i. e.* but I remember I have heard something more learned from my own Soul, which, being often seiz'd with a divine Enthusiasm, prophesies of Things which it understands not, which so far as I can remember, I will here deliver. By which solemn Preface he gives us notice, that some very great Mystery is to follow, and then he goes on, *ἔλεγε δέ μοι, κατὰ τὸν ἕνα ὄντως ὄντα Θεὸν δύο τὰς ἀνωτάτω εἶναι καὶ πρώτας δυνάμεις ἀγαθότητα καὶ ἐξουσίαν καὶ ἀγαθότητι μὲν τὸ πᾶν γεγεννηκέναι· ἐξουσίᾳ δὲ τοῦ γεννηθέντος ἄρχειν*, *i. e.* My Soul said to me, with that only true God there are two supreme and first Powers, *viz.* Goodness and Power, and that by the first all Things were made, and by the second all Things that were made are governed. Since therefore, as I have shewn before, he frequently asserts, that all Things were made by the Son of God, it is evident, that by Goodness here he means the same Son; and if so, what else can he mean by Power but *Psyche*, or the Holy Ghost? And these three divine Persons he elsewhere styles, *Τὸ ὄν, διαστολικὸν, τὴν ἵλεω δύναμιν*, *i. e.* the Being, the Ruling, and the benefick Power, *l.* 2. *de Agric. Noa.* Thus far this learned *Jew*, whose Writings, being originally in the *Greek* Language, have been delivered down to us without any considerable Alterations; but it is not to be expected that those Writings of the ancient *Jews*, which are written and preserved in their own Language, should be so express in this Article of the Trinity as those of the *Gentiles*; because for several Ages they were solely in the Possession of the modern *Jews*, by whom this Article hath all along been obstinately rejected, and therefore may reasonably be supposed to be castrated by them in all those Places where they more openly countenanced the christian Verity against them; but yet after all, there are sundry Passages remaining in them, which do very much favour this Article: Thus *Voisin. in Proœm. Pug. fid.* quotes this Passage from the Book *Reschit Choemah*, *c.* 3. *Tres sunt Dii, ut explicatur in Zohar his verbis, Quis est sensus, inquit R. Jose, horum verborum.* Deut. iv. 7. *Cui sunt Dii propinqui, dicendum erat, cui est Deus propinquus; Sed est Deus superior; est Deus timoris Isaac, est Deus inferior, & ita dicuntur esse Dii propinqui*, *i. e.* there are three Gods, as it is explained in the Words of the Book *Zohar*, *R Jose* said, what is the Meaning of those Words, *Deut.* iv. 7 *to whom the Gods are near*, whereas it should have been said, to whom God is near; but there is the superior God, there is the God of the Fear of *Isaac* and there is the inferiour God, and so they are said to be Gods that are near. And *Martin Raimund, Pug. fid. p.* 396. quotes a Passage out of *Midrasch Tillim*, in which there is mention made *trium Proprietatum quibus creatus est mundus*, *i. e.* of three Proprieties or Persons by whom the World was made. And to the same Purpose *Rittangelus*, in his Notes upon the Book *Jezirah*, quotes two Passages out of *Imre Binah*, *Tria sunt primaria & primordialia capita & coeterna, idque testatur splendor eorum numerationesque intellectuales in æternam testantur Trinitatem Regis*: There are three prime and primordial Heads and Co-eternal, and this their own Light testifies, and the intellectual Numerations do eternally testify the Trinity of the King, *p.* 3 *&* 36. So also *Amsworth* on the first of *Genesis* quotes another Passage from *R. Simeon Ben Jocai* in *Zoar* to the same Purpose, which is this, Come and see the Mystery of the Word *Elohim*, there are three Degrees, and every Degree by itself alone; and yet notwithstanding they are all one, and joined together in one, and are not divided one from another. But, to name no more, *Grotius* makes mention of some ancient Cabbalists, quoted in a Book called *Additamenta ad Lexicon Hebraicum Schindleri*, who distinguish God *in Tria Lumina & quidem nonnulli iisdem quibus Christiani nominibus Patris, Filii sive verbi, & Spiritus Sancti*, *i. e.* into three Lights, which some of them call by the same Names we Christians do, *viz.* Father, Son or Word, and Holy Ghost; and indeed, as their most ancient Writings do frequently make mention of the Word, under the Notion of a divine Person, as hath been shewed before; so they do also the *Ruach Hakkodesh*, or Holy Spirit, to whom their most ancient Writers attribute all Prophecy or Revelation; for so as I find them quoted by learned Men in *Pirche, R Eliezar, c.* 39. *R. Phineas, inquit, requievit Spiritus Sanctus super Josephum ab ipsius juventute usque ad diem obitûs ejus*, *i. e.* the Holy Spirit rested upon *Joseph* from his Youth, till the Day of his Death And *c.* 33. *R. Phineas ait, postquam omnes illi interfecti fuerant, viginti annis in Babel requievit Spiritus Sanctus super Ezekielem & eduxit eum in convalle Dora & ostendit ei multa ossa*, *i. e. R. Phineas* said, after they were all slain, the Holy Spirit rested twenty Years upon *Ezekiel* in *Babylon*, and led him forth into the Valley of *Dora*, and shewed him a great Number of Bones; and indeed it was a proverbial Speech of the *Jewish* Masters, as *Maimonides* tells us, *More Nev. Part* 2. *c.* 45. *Majestas divina habitat super eum & loquitur per Spiritum Sanctum*, *i. e.* the divine Majesty dwells upon such a one, and he speaks by the Holy Ghost; and that by this Holy Spirit they anciently meant a real Person, is evident, for so *Jonathan*'s Paraphrase on *Gen* i. 2. *Spiritus misericordiarum qui est ab ante Dominum, stante super faciem aquarum*, *i. e.* the Spirit of Mercies who is from before the Lord, standing upon the Face of the Waters; and *Bereschit Rabba*, speaking of the Spirit that moved upon the Face of the Water, *Gen.* i. 2. expresly affirms, *Hic est Spiritus Regis Messiæ*, this is the Spirit of Messias the King. So *Ead. Hal. c.* 12. *Tempore Regis Messiæ quando constabilitum erit regnum ejus & omnis populus ad ipsum collectus, recensebuntur singuli ex ore Spiritus Sancti*: In the Time of Messias the King, when his Kingdom shall be established, every one shall be called over by the Mouth of the Holy Ghost: In which Places there are Things and Actions expresly attributed to the Holy Ghost, which are proper only to a Person; and since by him they understood a Person, they must necessarily suppose him a divine Person, since by what follows it evidently appears, that in their own Scriptures divine Perfections were ascribed to him; and by what hath been said, that they believed three divine Persons in the Godhead, and accordingly *Eusebius* tells us, *ἔνθεν οἱ πάντες Ἑβραίων θεολόγοι μετὰ τὸν πάντων Θεὸν καὶ μετὰ πρωτότοκον αὐτοῦ σοφίαν τὴν τρίτην καὶ ἁγίαν δύναμιν ἅγιον πνεῦμα προσειπόντες ἀποθειάζουσιν ὑφ' οὗ καὶ οἱ θεῖοι προφῆται θεοφορούμενοι*, *i. e.* all the *Hebrew* Divines do acknowledge after the most high God, and after his first-born Wisdom, a third holy Power, whom they call the Holy Ghost, affirming him to be God, by whom the Prophets were inspired, *Præp. Evan. p.* 327.

The End of the Second PART.

OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

PART III.

To the RIGHT HONOURABLE

Sir *GEORGE TREBY*,

Lord CHIEF JUSTICE of the

COMMON-PLEAS.

My LORD,

THOSE excellent Treatiſes of *Chriſtian Life*, which were publiſhed ſome Years ſince by the learned *Author*, have, I doubt not, in a great meaſure anſwered his Deſign in writing them, which was to do as much good as he could to the World; and had he lived to finiſh the other Parts of it, we might have had ſuch a compleat Body of Chriſtian Inſtitutions in our own Language, as would have highly contributed towards a Revival of true Piety among us. For, beſides thoſe Pieces which have already ſeen the Light, 'twas the AUTHOR'S Deſign to proceed to a particular Explication of the ſeveral reſpective Duties which Men are obliged to render to *God*, their *Neighbours*, and *Themſelves*; and for a Concluſion of all, he propoſed a diſtinct Treatiſe of *Eccleſiaſtical Duties*.

The two Diſcourſes of *Juſtice* and *Mercy*, which I now preſent to Your LORDSHIP, were intended as a Part of that Duty which we owe to one another, and which, with other Enlargements, had the AUTHOR liv'd, would have made a Volume of themſelves. And the Diſcourſe of *Mortification* is likewiſe a Part of what he deſigned for the Explication of that Duty which Man owes himſelf, which was alſo intended for another diſtinct Volume. Beſides theſe he propoſed a particular Examination of thoſe great Duties which *God* requires; which together with the other *Volumes* would have compleated the whole Deſign. In Juſtice therefore to the *Memory* of this *incomparable*

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ble Person, I thought myself obliged to communicate to Your LORDSHIP this short Account of him. The Design which he proposed was *great* and *noble*, and I am sure those *Pieces* which he hath already published, do loudly speak the excellent Qualifications with which GOD had endowed him to compleat it, had not a *laborious Station*, and, what was worse, a very *sickly Constitution* at last interrupted him from the Prosecution of it.

As for these *Remains*, they are faithfully transcribed from the *Author's Manuscript*; and Your LORDSHIP may easily discern that they are his true and genuine Offspring by Your Perusal of them. I know Your LORDSHIP hath a very high Value and just Esteem for the Memory of that *great and good Man*, and that is a prevailing Inducement to take into Your Protection those Works which he hath left behind him. To You they address themselves, and I doubt not but under that *Character* which Your LORDSHIP bears, they will be sufficiently recommended to the World; and that they may effectually promote the *Good* of it, is the hearty Prayer of

Your Lordship's

most Obedient

Humble Servant,

J: GALE.

OF

OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

PART III.

CHAP. I.

Of Justice, *as it preserves the natural Rights of Men; and particularly in Reference to their* Bodies.

HAVING in a former Discourse asserted and explain'd the Nature of *moral Good* and *Evil* in human Actions; I shall now distinctly consider the Sum of all that *moral Duty*, which we owe to God and to our Neighbour; as the Prophet hath compriz'd it in these Words, *He hath shewed thee, O Man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?* Micah vi. 8. I begin with that Duty which God requires of us towards our *Neighbour*; and 'tis all imply'd in the two distinct Virtues of *Justice* and *Mercy*.

In discoursing of *Justice*, I shall endeavour these two Things: 1. To shew what that Justice is which is requir'd of us towards our Neighbour. 2. To prove that it is grounded upon such immutable Reasons as do render it a *moral Good*.

I. I shall endeavour to shew, what that Justice is which is owing to our Neighbour. In general, therefore, *Justice* consists in giving to every one his due; in which Latitude it comprehends all Matter of Duty: For every Duty is a Due to *God*, or our *Neighbour*, or our *Selves*, and accordingly every Performance of every Duty is a Payment of some due; and, as such, is an Act of *Righteousness*. And therefore in Scripture good Men are frequently styled *Righteous*, and the whole of Virtue and Goodness is called *Righteousness*, because it is a Payment of some due, either to *God*, our *Selves*, or our *Neighbours*. But Justice being here considered as a *distinct* and *particular Virtue*, must be understood in a more limited Sense; *viz.* for *Honesty* in all our Dealings with Men, or giving to every Man his due with whom we have any Intercourse. And wherein this consists, will best appear by considering what those Things are which are due from one Man to another, or what those Dues and Rights are which Men may claim by the *eternal Laws* of Righteousness. And these are twofold, 1. Natural, and 2. Acquired.

I begin with the First, *viz.* The natural Rights of Men, which are such as appertain to Men, as they are *reasonable Creatures*, and dwelling in mortal Bodies, and joined to one another by their natural Relations, and by Society. For in all these Capacities there accrue to Men certain *natural Rights* which we are obliged in Justice *not* to *violate*, but so far as we can to *secure* and *make good* to one another.

First, Therefore, we will consider Men as dwelling in *mortal Bodies*.
Secondly, As *rational Creatures*.
Thirdly, As joined to one another by *natural Relations*.

Fourthly, As naturally united in *Society*; and I will ſhew what Rights there are redounding to them from all theſe Reſpects and Conſiderations.

I. We will conſider Men as dwelling in *mortal Bodies*, in which there is a twofold Right accruing to them: 1. a Right to their *Bodies*: 2. a Right to their *bodily Subſiſtence*.

I. As dwelling in *mortal Bodies*, they have a natural Right to their *Bodies*, and to all the *Parts* of them; for their *Bodies* being the *Tenements* which the great Landlord of the World hath allotted to their *Souls* during their abode in this terreſtrial State, are upon that Account their undoubted Right; which unleſs they forfeit, they cannot be depriv'd of without manifeſt Injury and *Injuſtice*. For if *God* gave this *Body* to *my Soul*, it is certain that immediately under him *my Soul* hath a Right to it, and holding in *Capite* as it doth from the ſupreme Proprietor, is Tenant at Will to none but him, for this its earthly Habitation: So that *antecedently* to all human Laws and Conſtitutions, every *Soul* is veſted with a natural Right to its own *Body*; as being placed in, and put in Poſſeſſion of it by the God of Nature; and, till by its own free Act it hath *alienated* or *forfeited* its Right, there is none but God, (who hath reſerved to himſelf the *ſovereign* and *abſolute* Diſpoſal of it) can juſtly either diſpoſſeſs a Soul of its *Body*, or of any *Part* or *Member* of it; or offer any Violence to the Body, or put it any farther out of its Soul's Diſpoſal, than God himſelf hath done by placing it under the outward Reſtraints of *Government*. So that for any one either to kill or diſmember a Body, whoſe Soul hath not *forfeited* its Right to it; to enſlave or impriſon a Body, whoſe Soul hath neither *alienated* nor *forfeited* its Right to diſpoſe of it, is a Piece of high and crying *Injuſtice*. In ſhort, God hath placed the *immortal Soul* of Man in the Tenement of a *mortal Body*, in which it hath thereupon the Right of a Tenant at Will, that holds at the Pleaſure of his Landlord; by whom it is impowered to enjoy it for its own Habitation, to defend it againſt outward Violence, and diſpoſe of it for its own Needs and Conveniences. So that unleſs he be impowered by *God*, there is no *Man* can rightfully deſtroy or diſmember, or without his Conſent, inſlave or impriſon another Man's Body; unleſs it be in Defence of his own Life, Livelihood, or Liberty, which every Man hath a natural Right to defend. But then, ſince for the common Good and Defence of all, God hath placed his *reſerved Authority* over our Bodies in the Hands of *human Government*, it is no Violation of the Right of our Souls, for the *Government* under which we are placed, to deſtroy or diſmember, inſlave or impriſon our Bodies, whenever by offending others, we render it *neceſſary* for the *Defence* and *Good of All*. And ſince the *Government* hath, ſo far as the Common-Weal requires, *God*'s own *Authority* over our Bodies in its Hands; it is no more injurious to our Souls, for *That* to diſpoſe of our Lives and Members, Livelihoods and Liberties, for the common Security and Good, than if God himſelf ſhould do it immediately; ſince the Government doth it by *his Right* and *Authority*, which is *paramount* to all the natural Rights of our Souls. But for any others, either to take away the Life, or Members of another's Body, except it be neceſſary for their own Defence; or to enſlave, or impriſon another's Body, except it be upon free Conſent, or juſt Forfeiture, is an outragious Invaſion of the natural Rights of human Souls.

II. As Men dwell in *mortal Bodies*, they have alſo a Right to their *bodily Subſiſtence*. For, for God to give them a Tenant's Right in their mortal Bodies would be very inſignificant, unleſs we ſuppoſe he hath therewith given them ſome Right to thoſe *outward Goods*, that are neceſſary to their *Maintenance* and *Subſiſtence*: For God being the ſupreme Proprietor of this lower World, as well as of thoſe Tenements of Fleſh we live in; it muſt needs be ſuppoſed, that, as by placing our Soul in this Body, he hath given *her* a Right to it; ſo by placing our Body in this World, he hath given *it* a Right to ſuch a Portion of this World's Goods, as are *neceſſary* to its *Repair* and *Maintenance*. And though in the unequal Diviſion of the World, that

that now is, he hath given to some a larger Share of it than to others; yet it is not to be supposed he hath so appropriated *All* to some, as to leave nothing for all the rest. For as all Men are *equal* in their *natural Faculties* and *Indowments*, so according to *original Constitution* they were also equal in their *outward Properties* and *Possessions*; and all Things being promiscuously exposed to the Use and Injoyment of *All*, every one from the common Stock assumed as his own Right what he needed. And as for the *Inequality* and *private Interests* that are now among us, they were By-blows of our *Fall*; for it was Sin that introduced our Degrees and Distances, that devised the Names of *Rich* and *Poor*, begot Ingrossings and Inclosures of Things, and forged those two pestilent Words *Meum* and *Tuum*, which have since ingendred so much Strife and Mischief in the World. And though God hath made these Inclosures *Rights* by his long and continued Permission of them, yet he hath not thereby parted with his own Right to them: He by an immutable Right is still *paramount* of all his Creation, and every thing in it unalienably belongeth to him. And as for those *inclosed Properties*, with which he hath vested us in such unequal Proportions, he hath committed them to us as *Stewards*, and not transferred them upon us as *Masters*; and so without any Injury to us, may appropriate what *Part* of them he pleaseth to what *Use* he pleaseth; which when he hath done, we cannot without manifest Injustice otherwise dispose of that *appropriate Part*, than to the Use and Service for which *he* hath appointed it. Now out of every Man's Estate and Property he hath actually reserved some *appropriate* Portion to be disposed of to the Poor and Needy, who have nothing else to subsist by; and in this Part of our Estates the *Poor* have the same Right from *God*, that we have in all the other Parts of it. So that this World being now cantoned out so very unequally among Men, yet according to *God's Allotment* every Man hath Right to such a Share of it, as is at least sufficient to keep him from being starved, or pinched with *Extremity* of Need; and in this Method God hath assigned to every Man a *Child's Portion*, which in some fair Way or other ought to be obtained, *viz.* either by *legal Right*, or by *humble Request*; which latter, in Conscience, ought to take effect, as well as the former. For now according to this latter Constitution he hath appointed the *Rich* to be his Stewards and Treasurers for the *Poor*; with a strict Charge that they dispense to every one *his Meat in due Season*. The *Honour* of distributing is conferred on the former, as a Trial of their Fidelity and Bounty; the *Right* of receiving is conferred on the latter, as a Trial of their Patience and Gratitude: And thus God hath wisely projected, that all his Children should be both effectually, and quietly provided for; that one Man's *Abundance* should *supply* another's *Wants*, that so there might be an *Equality*, as St. *Paul* expresses it, 2 *Cor.* viii. 14. For since no Man can enjoy *more* than he needeth, and every Man ought to have *so much* as he needeth, there could be no *great* Inequality among Men, if Things were administred according to the Institution of God. But if out of our Abundance we refuse to relieve the poor Man's Necessities, we are unjust both to God and him; to God, because we misapply his Goods, and cross his Orders; to him, because we wrongfully usurp and detain from him the Portion which God hath allowed him; and so under a Vizard of Right, and Possession, we are no better than Robbers in the Account of God; when by refusing to relieve our Brother's Necessities we spoil him of his Goods; *his Goods* I say, by the very same Title that any Thing is ours, even by the free Donation of God. 'Tis the hungry Man's Bread which we hoard up in our Barns, his Meat that we glut, and *his* Drink that we guzzle; 'tis the *naked* Man's Apparel that we shut up in our Presses, and do so exorbitantly ruffle and flaunt in, and what we *deny* out of our Abundance to an *Object* of real *Pity*, and *Charity*, is in the Account of God an unjust *Usurpation* of his Right. For by the Institution of God, I *owe* every Man this *Right*; not to see him pine, and perish for Want, whilst I surfeit, and swim

in Plenty. And thus you see what Rights appertain to a Man in his first Capacity, *viz.* as inhabiting a *Mortal Body.*

Chap. II.

Of Justice *in preserving the Rights of Men, consider'd as* Rational Creatures.

II. I Proceed in the *Second* Place to observe, That there are other Rights accruing to Men, as they are *Rational Creatures*; for it is this, indeed that gives a Right to common Justice to be governed by *Laws*, and by Rewards and Punishments, that we are free and rational Agents who can *chuse* or *refuse*, and determine our selves which way soever we think fit or reasonable. For without *Reason*, and *Free-will*, we could no more be capable of Laws, nor subject to Rewards and Punishments than Stones or Trees are: For no Law can oblige a Being that hath no *Power* over his own Actions; nor can he deserve to be rewarded when he doth *well*, nor punished when he doth *evil*, if it be not in his *Power* to do otherwise; and therefore Beasts cannot be said to do either *justly*, or *unjustly* towards one another; because whatsoever *Good*, or *Evil* they do one another, they do it *necessarily*, and it was not in their Power to do otherwise. But because Men are *free Agents*, and have Power to determine themselves either to do *Good* or *Evil* to one another; therefore of Right they claim of each other the *mutual* Performance of such *Goods*, and Forbearance of such *Evils* as agree or disagree with the State and Condition of their Natures. And hence every rational Creature hath a *Right* to be used and treated by those of his own kind, agreeably to the State of his rational Nature; and for one Man to treat another otherwise, is not only *hurtful*, but also *injurious*. Now the Rights which one rational Creature may by the Condition of his Nature claim of another, may be reduced to these four Particulars;

First, Every Man has a Right to an *equitable Treatment* from every Man.
Secondly, Every Man hath a Right *to judge* for himself so far as he is capable.
Thirdly, Every Man hath Right not to be *forced*, or *impelled* to *act* contrary to the Judgment of right Reason.
Fourthly, Every Man hath a Right to be *respected* by every Man according to the Dignity of his Nature.

I. Every Man hath a Right to an *equitable Treatment* from every Man; that is, to be treated according to the Measures of that Golden Rule of Equity prescribed by our Saviour, *Matth.* vii. 12. *Therefore all Things whatsoever you would that Men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets*, i. e. In all your Intercourses with Men, suppose you had exchanged Conditions with them, and that you were in theirs, and they in yours; and be sure you do them all that Good, which, upon a due Consideration of the Case, you could reasonably expect or desire of them, if you were in their Persons and Circumstances. And this Right of being treated by others, as they would expect to be treated by us, supposing they were in our Circumstances, arises from that *Equality* of Nature that is between us, which gives every one a Right to be equally treated by every one, and to claim all those good Offices from others, which they might reasonably claim of him, if they were in his State and Circumstances. For we being all propagated from the *same* Loins, and Partakers of the *same* Nature, every

ry Man in the World is by Cognation of Blood, and Agreement of Nature, every Man's *Brother* and *Kinsman*. We are all but so many several Streams issuing from one *common Source*, but so many several Twigs sprouting from the *same Stock*; we are all of us but *one Blood* derived through several Chanels; but *one Substance* multiplied, and dilated into several Times and Places, by the miraculous Efficacy of the divine Benediction. We are all fashioned according to the same *original Idea*, resembling God our common Father: we are all endowed with the same Faculties, Inclinations, and Affections; and do all conspire in the same essential Ingredients of our Nature: and there is nothing doth distinguish, or diversifie us, but what is *accidental* to our *Being*; such as Age and Place, Figure and Stature, Colour and Garb; so that every Man is not only our most lively *Image*, but in a manner our very *Substance*, or another *our self*, under a small Variation of present Circumstances: which Circumstances are to be considered in every Application of the above-named Rule of *Equality* to our Actions. If I am *superiour* to another, either in my Place, or Relation, or in the Goods of my Mind, or Fortune; I am only obliged by this Rule, to do that by him which I might reasonably desire he should do by me, were he as much *my Superiour*, as I am *his*. But when all Men *naturally* as such are equal, and do stand upon *even* Terms and level Ground, there ought to be no other Inequality in their mutual Treatment of one another, but what is owing to the Inequality of their Circumstances: and he who doth that to another Man, which upon good Reason he would not have another do to him in the same Circumstances, doth unjustly *usurp* a Superiority over him, which neither *Nature* nor *Providence* allows of. For there is no Proposition in the Mathematicks more self-evident than this, *Paria paribus conveniunt*, equal Things agree to equal Persons; and therefore since we are all equal by Nature, whatsoever Things are due to *me*, must by the same Reason be due to *another* in the same Circumstances; and therefore he that denies to another Man that which he conceives he might justly claim of him in the same Condition, unjustly with-holds from him a right that is due to him, as he is his Equal in Nature.

II. Every Man hath a Right to *judge* for himself so far as he is capable: for we must either suppose that every *Being* hath a Right to *use* its own Faculties, or else that it hath its Faculties *in vain*: for to what purpose serve its Faculties, if it hath no Right to make *use* of them? And to what purpose serveth our Faculty of Reason, but only to *judge* for our selves in all such Matters as fall within the Sphere of our Cognizance? Which if our Reason be debarred of, it stands for a lonely Cypher in our Natures, and is altogether *useless* and *insignificant*? And if in any Thing our Reason hath a Right to *judge* for us, then much more in Matters of *Religion*, in which our highest and most important Interest is concerned. So that to deny it the Right of judging for us here, is to render it useless in our greatest Importance, and to disable our *best Faculty* from being serviceable to our *best Interest*. 'Tis true, there are sundry *Controversies* about religious Matters, which every Man's Reason cannot judge of; the Arguments *pro* and *con* depending either upon *Criticisms* of Language, or *Metaphysical* Niceties, or ancient *Histories*; which are all beyond the Comprehensions of Persons of mean and vulgar Understandings: who are therefore obliged in all such Matters as these, to submit to the Determination of their *lawful Guides* and *Governours*. But as for the great and *necessary Matters* of Religion, they are plain and obvious to the meanest Understanding; and consequently herein every Man ought to exercise his natural Right of *judging* for himself, and not swallow his Religion blindfold, without trying it by the *Test* of his Reason. And certainly they who remove the Cognizance of Religion out of the Court of Reason, take away that which doth most properly and naturally fall under its Determination. For Religion is the *chief End* of Man's Creation, as he is

is a reasonable Being, and thereby capable of Religion: and to be sure where the *End* is natural, the *Means* must be so too. And therefore as Horses that were made for Burthen, have a natural Ability to bear; and as Birds that were made to fly, have a Faculty and Wings for that Purpose; so rational Souls that were made for Religion, must needs be supposed to have some *Power* naturally placed in them, for the *Exercise*, and *Judgment* and *Choice* of it. And what else can that be but their Reason? So that to deny Men the Liberty to *judge* for themselves in that which is their *natural End* and *highest Interest*, is as great a Piece of *Violence* and *Injustice* as can be offered to human Nature. And of this very Matter the Church of *Rome* is highly guilty; for it commands *Assent* without Evidence; and imperiously requires Men to believe her Doctrines without Examination; to rely *implicitly* upon her Authority, and swallow down her Faith by the *lump*, without ever inquiring whether it be Physick, or Poison. For the leading Principle of the *Romish* Religion is this, that the Churches *Authority* is the *Reason* of our Faith, and that Men are bound to believe what she believes without any farther Proof or Evidence; by which tyrannical Procedure she uses her wretched Children, as the *Philistines* did *Sampson*, first puts out their Eyes, and recreates herself with their Blindness and Ignorance. For unless they wink hard, and believe at a venture whatsoever she proposes, they are sure to feel the *Edges* both of her Spiritual and Temporal *Swords*; and though they are never so modest, peaceable and humble in their Dissents, to incur her Anathema's, which have always the Sting of Fire and Faggot in the Tail of them. Now what is this but to *force* the Opinions of Men, and *drive* their Reason from its Throne of Judicature; for he that punishes a Man *barely* for his *Opinion*, doth in so doing endeavour to rob him of his natural Right of *judging* for himself: which is the greatest Tyranny in the World, it being an Exercise of Dominion over the Minds of Men, which are subject only to the Empire of God. 'Tis true, if in judging for themselves Men take up Opinions that are *vicious*, or *destructive* to Government, their wicked Practice is justly punishable according to the Proportion of its Malignity; for otherwise Men's Right of *judging* for themselves will soon be made a Sanctuary for all the Villanies in the World. And though no Man ought to be punished *barely* for his Opinion, yet he may be justly punished for *practising* his Opinion, though his Practice be *indifferent* in its own Nature. For *indifferent* Things, which God hath neither commanded nor forbidden, are the proper Matter of all *human Laws*; and therefore if upon a false Opinion that what the Law enjoins is not *indifferent*, but *sinful*, I practise contrary to the Law, I am justly *punishable*; because my Mistake alters not the Nature of the Thing. If it be indifferent, it is a proper Object of human Laws, whether I think it so or no, and as such may justly be *imposed*; and the Imposition being just in it self, our not complying with it is justly punishable. Once more; though no Man ought to be punished for his *Opinion*, yet he may be justly punishable for making a publick *Profession* of it; for there is no doubt but Men may be restrained by Laws from *propagating* their little Opinions into Factions, and dividing themselves upon every different Persuasion into opposite Parties. Otherwise it will be impossible, considering the Passions of Men, to maintain any *Unity*, or *Concord* in civil or sacred Societies. And therefore where such Restriction is, Men ought to be satisfied with this, that they freely enjoy their Liberty of *Opining*, and are not deprived of their natural Right to *judge* for themselves; and so they ought either to keep their little Opinions to themselves, or at least not to vex and disturb the *Publick* by a fierce Endeavour to propagate them to others." And this due Deference to Men's natural Right of *judging* for themselves, hath been always punctually observed in the Church of *England*; for it neither damns, nor censures, persecutes, nor destroys Men upon the Score of Difference in *Opinion*; provided their *Opinion* doth not lead them to *wicked* or *seditious Practices*; but hopes well, of all that live well, and receives all

into its Communion that desire it; provided they believe but the Apostle's Creed, and the Doctrine of the four first general Councils: 'Tis true, it forbids Men so to *profess* their Dissents to the Articles of its Doctrine and Discipline, as to *seduce* her Children from her Communion, and list them into Factions against her; and this every Church must necessarily do, that values its own *Peace* and *Preservation:* But it pretends not to invade the Liberty of their *Thoughts*, or to lay rigid Restraints on their *Opinions*; and so long as they dissent from us, *modestly* and *peaceably*, they may enjoy their own Opinions, and our Communion too. And as for those *foreign Communities* of Christians that differ from us, we pass no severe Sentences against them; but do believe, and hope, and earnestly pray, that the God of all Mercies will pity their Errors, and connive at their Defects, and finally unite them to us for ever in the blissful Communion of the *Church Triumphant*. Nor doth our Religion obtrude it self upon the Minds of Men, by the bare Warrant of an *imperious Authority*; but fairly appeals to our Understandings, and casts it self upon the Tryal of our *Reason*; exacting of us no farther Assent, than what the Evidence claims upon which it is founded; and is so far from exacting of us a *blindfold Assent* to it without Examination, that it readily exposes it self to the severest *Enquiry*, and asks no other Favour but to stand, or fall by the impartial Sentence of our *Reason*. It tells us both *what* we are to believe, and *why*; and not only *allows*, but *requires* us to examine the Grounds and Reasons of it; in all which there is not the least Shadow of *imposing* on Men's Minds, or usurping on their Rights of *judging* for themselves. But alas! 'Tis not only the Church of *Rome* that is guilty of this unnatural *Tyranny*; for how many are there of all Parties among our selves, that cannot endure the least *Contradiction*, but expect all Judgments should bow to theirs, and receive *their* imperious Dictates for Oracles; and are ready to *censure* all that dissent from *them*, as Men of reprobate Minds, and to *hate* and *persecute* them, because they cannot believe as fast as *they*? As if no Man had a Right to carry his Eyes in his own Head, but *they*; and *their* Understandings were to be a Rule and *Standard* to the whole World: If another Man differs from *me*, do not I differ as much from *him*? And hath not he as much Right to judge for himself as I? But he is mistaken, you will say, and I am not; and possibly he is as confident, that I am mistaken and not he; and if I think I cannot be mistaken, I am more mistaken than he: But certainly it is neither *Presumption* for him to know *more* than I, nor *Sin* to know *less*. What then is to be done, but to leave one another in the quiet Possession of each other's Right; and not to hector and swagger upon every Difference in *Opinion*; because he that differs from me, hath as much Right to judge for himself as I, though he refuses to prostrate his Understanding to mine; which for any Man to expect, is a most unjust Invasion of the common Rights of human Nature.

III. Every Man hath a Right not to be forced, or *impelled* to *act* contrary to the Judgment of right Reason. For right Reason is the *natural Guide* of all reasonable Creatures; 'tis the Light of their Feet, and the Lanthorn of their Paths, and the Star by which they ought to direct their Courses. And what can be more unjust, than to force any Man to act against that which is the Law of his Nature? For if he who gave me my Nature, gave me right Reason for the *Law* and *Guide* of it, I must necessarily have an undoubted Right to a full and free Permission to *follow* it; otherwise he hath given me a *Law* in vain. And if I have a Right to a full Permision to follow the *Law* of right Reason, then for any Man to impel me to act counter to it, either by Hope or Fear, or any other Motive, is a high *Injustice* to my *Nature*. For he who induces me to do any wicked, or unreasonable Action, which I should not have done, had not he induced me to it, doth

in so doing, so far as in him lies, not permit me to follow the *eternal Laws* of right Reason. As for Instance, the Law of right Reason requires me, when I pretend to give Evidence to any Matter of Fact, to testify nothing but the *Truth* to the best of my Knowledge; he therefore who endeavours, either by Promises or Threats, to suborn me to testify *falsely*, doth thereby hinder me, so far as in him lies, from hearkening to the Call of right Reason. Again, right Reason requires me to make good my *Promises*, whether they be to my Superiours, Inferiours, or Equals; and much more when I confirm them with an Oath; he therefore who by any means endeavours to persuade me to *falsify* my Word or Oath, doth in so doing, so far as in him lies, not permit me to follow what right Reason prescribes. Once more, right Reason commands me to bridle my *Appetite* with Temperance and Sobriety; he therefore that by Force, or Persuasion, endeavours to make me *drunk*, doth, to the utmost of his Power, with-hold and restrain me from following that which is the Law of my Nature. In a Word, he who by Command or Threat, Promise or Persuasion puts me upon any *sinful Action*, is not only guilty in the Sight of God of the Sin which I commit by his Inducement, but also of doing a high *Injustice* to my Nature, of putting it out of its true Biass, and not permitting it to move and act according to the *Laws* of Reason; which is a Piece of the most *outragious Violence* that can be offered to a rational Creature. Besides that by inducing another Man to sin, I do, as far as in me lies, betray him to eternal *Punishment*; which is as barbarous an Injustice to his *Soul*, as the Devil himself can be guilty of. For should not I call that Man a treacherous Villain, who, while he pretends to embrace his Friend, should secretly stab him to the Heart? And is it not a much more bloody Villainy, under a specious Pretence of Kindness and Good-fellowship, to stab my Brother to the *Soul*, and wound him to *eternal Death?* But whilst, like a heedless Wrestler, I thus eagerly endeavour to give my Brother a Fall, it is a thousand to one but I fall with him, and bear him Company to *eternal Torment*.

IV. *Fourthly* and *lastly*, Every Man hath a *Right*, as he is a reasonable Creature, to be respected by every Man, according to the *Dignity* of his *Nature*. For as in particular Kingdoms the *King* is the Fountain of Honour, and every Man under him ought to be respected according to that *Rank* and *Degree* of Dignity, which the royal Stamp hath imprinted on him; so in the universal Kingdom of the World, God is the Fountain of Honour, and every *Being* under him ought to be treated and respected according to the *Dignity* of its Rank, and suitably to that *Character* of Perfection which *God* hath imprinted on its Nature. Since therefore *Man* is so highly advanced by God in the Scale of Beings, as being not only a *sensitive*, but a *rational* and *immortal* Creature, he hath a Right to be treated as such by all that are of his Class and Order. And for a Man to treat a Man otherwise, is *wrongfully* to depose and degrade him from that noble Rank of *Being*, wherein the God of Nature hath placed him. For whatsoever his *outward* Condition may be, I ought to consider him as a *Man*, as one that is placed in the same Rank of *Being* with my *self*; though he be my *Slave* or Vassal, I ought to respect him as an Individual of my *own Kind*, and not use him rudely, harshly or contemptuously like a Dog; though he be poor and mean in his *outward* Circumstances, yet I ought to regard him as a Branch that is sprung out of my *own Stock*, and not to contemn or despise him, as if he were a Creature of an inferiour *Species*; though he should be a *Fool*, or a *Mad-man*, yet I ought to respect him as my Brother *Man*, *i. e.* endowed with the same *Faculties* with my self, though through the unhappy Defect of his bodily Organs he cannot exert and exercise them; and not to scorn

and deride him, as if he were an *Ape*, or a *Baboon*, that seemed to be made on purpose to be laughed at: Yea, though (which is worst of all) he should be a *lewd* or *wicked* Man, yet I ought to consider him as a *Stem* of my *own Root*, and not abuse, disdain or vilify him, as if he were only a *two-legged Brute*, or an *upright Animal*. So that there is a Respect that is eternally *due* to humane Nature; where-ever it is, or whatever Disadvantages it is attended with, it is stamped with the Image of God, and that ought to be reverenced by the whole Creation. And therefore whoever uses a Man inhumanely, affronts both *God* and his *own Kind*, and violates the most sacred Right of humane *Nature*. If therefore we would render to Men their natural Right and Due, we must take Care not to behave our selves *rudely* and *insolently*, *superciliously* and *contemptuously* towards them; and we must endeavour, as much as in us lies, to accommodate our selves to their particular Tempers, and not be *froward* and *untractable*, or tenacious of our own Humour, especially when it lies in another Man's Way; but be apt to recede and give Place, that there may be room for other Mens Humours as well as ours. For what Reason is there, that our particular Humour should take up all the World? *We* have no more Right to be morose and inflexible, than *other* Men; and should they be as unyielding as *we*, we must either stand at a perpetual *Bay*, or resolve to jostle with every one we meet, till *we* have forced all to give Way, or *they* have forced *us*. For whilst we want this Complaisance towards others, we are in Society like irregular Stones in a Building, which *take up* more room than they *fill*; and till they are polished and made *even*, will not permit others to lie near them. This Respect therefore we owe to humane Nature, which is *common* to all Men, to file off that unmanly *Sharpness* and *Ruggedness* of Humour, which renders us perverse and untractable in our Conversation; that so we may be able to compose ourselves into such respectful, courteous and obliging Deportment towards all Men, as is due to the *essential Dignity* of humane Nature. And thus you see what Rights are accruing to Men as they are rational Creatures, and consequently what Acts of *Justice*, as such, they owe to one another.

Chap. III.

Of Justice *in preserving the Rights of Men, as united together by* Natural Relations; *and as joined together in* Society.

III. WE will consider Men as rational Creatures *united* together by *natural Relations*; such as Parents and Children, Brothers and Sisters, and consanguineous Kindred, in which several Relations they have their peculiar *Rights* appertaining to them. Thus *Parents* by giving *Nurture* and Education to their Children, have a natural *Right* to be beloved and reverenced and obeyed by them; and for *Children* to with-hold these *Dues* from them is not only a foul *Ingratitude*, but a *great Injustice*; they owe their Parents for their Lives and Limbs, for the Health of their Bodies, and the Use of their Faculties; and what a small Composition is there in their *Love* and *Obedience* for so great a Debt? They borrowed their *Being* from their Parents, and therefore are their natural Subjects, Properties and Pensioners; and to be sure every *Lord* hath a Right to the Obedience of his *Subject*, every *Owner* to the Disposal of his *Property*, every *Benefactor* to the Love of his *Pensioner*; and consequently every *Parent*, who is *all these* together, to all these Respects and Duties from their *Children*. And so on the other Hand, *Children* have a Right to be treated as Children to their *Parents*, that

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is, as their natural Images and Copies, as Parts of their own Subſtance, as Fleſh of their Fleſh, and Bone of their Bones, or as *themſelves* derived and multiplied; which gives them a natural Right to be dearly beloved and kindly treated, to be fed and cloathed, inſtructed and provided for by their Parents, according to their *Power* and *Ability:* And for any Parent not to render theſe *Dues* and *Rights* to his Children, is not only an unnatural *Cruelty*, but a barbarous *Injuſtice.* And then for Brethren and Siſters and conſanguineous Relations, their partaking of the ſame *Blood* and *Subſtance*, as being coined in the ſame *Mint*, and more immediately derived from the ſame *Root* and *Fountain*, gives them a natural Right to be *mutually* beloved, and eſteemed, and relieved, and aſſiſted by one another; and they cannot be unkind, ill-natur'd, or hard-hearted towards one another, without breaking all the Ties of *Nature*, and being unjuſt Violaters of its ſacred *Rights.* Theſe in ſhort, are the Rights which accrue to Men, as *united* together by natural *Relations.*

IV. *Fourthly* and *laſtly*, We will conſider Men as rational Creatures joined together in *Society:* And becauſe *Society* is natural to Men, and that not only as they are rational Creatures, but as they were always born and bred in *Society*; therefore whatſoever Rights accrue to them from hence may be juſtly ranked among thoſe Rights which are *Natural.* And Men being by Nature united in *Society* with one another, there doth from thence accrue to us a Right to all that is *neceſſary* to the obtaining the common Benefits of *Society*; otherwiſe our being united in Society would be perfectly *inſignificant* to us. Now the common Benefit of Society is *mutual Aſſiſtance, Comfort* and *Support*; to the obtaining of which theſe Things are abſolutely neceſſary. Firſt, *Love.* Secondly, *Peace.* Thirdly, *Truth.* Fourthly, *Repute.* Fifthly, *Protection.* Sixthly, *Communication* in the Profits of Intercourſe. To all which every Man muſt have a Right by Virtue of his being in *Society*; otherwiſe he is in Society to no Purpoſe. Theſe Things I ſhall but very briefly inſiſt on, becauſe I have handled moſt of them at large upon another Occaſion.

I. By Virtue of our being united in *Society*, we have a Right to be *beloved* of one another. For being all incorporate Members of one Body, we naturally owe each other a *mutual* Sympathy and Fellow-feeling of each other's Pains and Pleaſures; without which we can never be concerned as we ought to *ſuccour* and *relieve* one another. If I *partake* in another's Joys and Sorrows, it is my Intereſt to contribute all I am able to his Happineſs; but unleſs I am *Partner* in his Fortunes, it will be indifferent to me whether he be happy, or miſerable. And as it is *Sympathy* that engages us to a *mutual Aſſiſtance*, ſo it is *Love* that engages us to a *mutual Sympathy*; it is *Love* that confederates our Souls, and cauſes us to eſpouſe one another's Intereſts; and therefore ſo far as we fall ſhort of this, we muſt neceſſarily fall ſhort of the End of our *Society*, which is to *aid* and *aſſiſt* one another: Which we ſhall never do, unleſs we are conſtantly inclined to it by a *mutual Benevolence.* But while we hate, and malign one another; our being united together in *Society* will only furniſh us with ſurer Means and fairer Opportunities to wreck our Spite upon each other. So that not to *love* one another, while we are thus aſſociated, is not only *uncharitable*, but *unjuſt*; ſince we thereby rob one another of one of the moſt *neceſſary* Means to obtain the End of our Society. For when Mens *Hearts* are divided, 'tis impoſſible their *Hands*, ſhould be long united in a *mutual* Defence and Aſſiſtance; ſo that by withdrawing our Love from each other, we do ſo far as in us lies, *excommunicate* one another from the common Benefits of *Society*; which ſince we have all a natural Right to, is highly *diſhoneſt* and *injurious.*

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II. By Virtue of our being united in *Society*, we have a Right to *Peace*; that is, to live peaceably and quietly our selves, so long as we do not causelesly vex and disturb others. For *Society* being nothing but an *united Multitude*, it is indispensably necessary to the Preservation of its Union, that every individual Member should *quietly* comport himself towards every one, in that Degree and Order wherein he is placed; because as the Health of natural Bodies depends upon the Harmony of their Parts, so doth the common Good of Societies, or political Bodies. It is *Peace* and *mutual Accord* which is the Soul that doth both animate and unite Society, and keep its Parts from dispersing, and flying abroad into Atoms; which nothing but Force and Violence can hinder them from, when once they are broken and divided. For he that cannot enjoy his Peace *in* Society, is in a worse Condition than if he were *out* of it, and lived in some solitary Desart alone by himself: For there is no *Solitude* so dismal, as a *vexatious* and *quarrelsome* Society. Whilst therefore Men are of an unpeaceable Temper, and do affect to live like *Salamanders*, in the Fire of Strife and Contention; they are the common *Pests* and *Nuisances* of Society: For where-ever they dwell, they lay an Imbargo on all sociable Communion, stop all the Interchanges of good Offices between Men, turn all Conversations into Tragedies, and convert all Societies into Maps, and Images of *Hell*, that black and dismal Region of dark Hatred, fiery Wrath and horrible Tumult. And whereas by the *fundamental Laws* of Society, every Man hath an undoubted Right, not to be *disturbed* in the Enjoyment of his innocent *Pleasures*, not to be hindred in the advancing his lawful *Profits*, not to be interrupted in the Prosecution of his reasonable *Designs*, not to be detained in his *Afflictions*, or vexed and grieved with causeless *Aggravations* of them; it is the proper Business of *litigious Spirits* to invade and overthrow these Rights, and, so far as they are able, to turn every Man out of the Possession and Enjoyment of them. So that they are a *publick Offence* and *Injury* to Mankind; and ought to be looked upon as so many *common Barretors* in the World. In short, every Man by Virtue of his being in *Society* hath a Right to *Peace*, so long as he demeans himself justly and peaceably towards others; he therefore that disturbs another Man's Peace, unless it be in *Defence* of his own, or other Mens *Right* or *Peace*, is an Infringer of the *natural* Rights of human *Society*.

III. By Virtue of our being united in *Society*, we have a Right to *Truth*; that is, we have a Right to know the true Sense of each other's *Minds* and *Intentions*, whensoever we pretend to report and discover it by our *Speech*; for it is only our *Speech* that capacitates us for a rational *Society*. Our Words are the *Credentiaries* and *Intelligencers* of the Society and Intercourse of our Minds: and it is only by *these* that Souls do correspond and communicate their Thoughts to one another: It is by these that they mutually divert their Sorrows, and mingle their Mirth; impart their Secrets, communicate their Counsels, and make mutual Compacts and Agreements to supply and assist each other. And indeed *Words* are the *Rudders* that steer all human Affairs, the Spring that set the Wheels of Actions a going; and the Hands work, the Feet walk, and all the Members and all the Senses act by their Direction and Impulse; and there is scarce any Communication, or Intercourse among Men, but what is transacted by their *Speech*. So that if Men were under no Obligation to express their Thoughts *truly* to one another, there could be no such thing as human *Society* in the World; for it is impossible their Minds should converse, while their Words do falsely *echo* and report their Thoughts. In a word, Society and Conversation being the great *Bank* and *Exchange* of Souls, *Truth* and *Integrity* herein is the one publick Faith of Mankind; which every Man virtually engages himself to keep, by being and continuing a Member of human *Society*. For human Society being a Society of *Minds*, implies in the very Nature of it an universal Contract and Agreement to signi-

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fy our Minds *truly* to one another; and therefore since *Words* are the natural Instruments by which this Signification is made, every Man by Virtue of that Contract hath a Right to have the *true Meaning* of every Man's *Mind* in his Words, to have every Man turn himself inside outward to him whensoever he speaks, and to measure his Words by his Meaning, and his Meaning, so far as he is able, by the *Truth* and *Reality* of Things. And therefore whosoever *lies* or *equivocates* to another, by laying Ambushes in his Words, or lurking behind them in reserved Meanings, doth thereby *injuriously* deprive him of the *natural Rights* of *Society*. And therefore by the way, whatsoever the *Romish* Casuists may pretend, *Equivocation* is as great an Injustice as *Lying*; being directed to the same End and Purpose, *viz.* to rob those whom we speak to of their *Right* to our Meaning and Intention, which he who *equivocates* doth as effectually, as he that lyes. So that in reality an equivocating *Jesuit* is as great an *Outlaw* to Society, as a common *Lyar*; nor can his *ambiguous* Words be any more depended on than *false* ones, for the Signification of his Meaning; but if what he falsely or equivocally *affirms* to be his Mind and Meaning, he attests with his *Oath*, he doth not only thereby wrong *Man*, but horribly affront God. For an *Oath* is a solemn Invocation of God to bear Witness to what we *assert* or *promise*; and therefore if what we assert be false, we call *God* to witness to a *Lye*; which is to suppose either that there is no God at all, or, which is a thousand times worse, that God is as great a *Lyar* as our selves. For he that calls God to witness what he saith, must be presumed to believe that God will witness *for him*, and consequently that God will witness falsely, if what he says be false; which is such a Blasphemy against the God of *Truth*, as no Vengeance can sufficiently expiate. And as in the Matter of *Assertion* every Man hath a Right to *Truth*, so he hath also in the Matter of *Promise*; provided he be promised nothing but what is *lawful* and *possible*: And therefore for any Man to promise what he intends not to perform or go back from his Promise, when he lawfully may, or can perform it, is an Act of unjust *Rapine*; and I may every whit as honestly rob another of what *is his* without my Promise, as of what I have made *his* by it, he having an *equal Right* to both, by the fundamental *Laws* of Society; but if he promises with an *Oath*, as in Matters of Publick Trust and Administration we usually do, he doth not only owe a just and punctual Performance unto *Man*, but to *God* himself, whom he calls to witness that what he *swears* he intends to perform, according to the *true* and *natural* Meaning of his Words; and he solemnly invocates God to avenge his Non-performance. So that if he fail of what he hath promised by his *Oath*, or doth not execute it according to its true *Meaning*; he is guilty not only of a high Injustice to *Man*, but of a horrid Prophanation of the Name of *God*; whom he hath solemnly called to witness to a Lye, whose Wrath he hath imprecated on his own Head, and whose Justice he hath obliged by a dreadful Contract severely to avenge his *Perjury*. He therefore who *lyes*, *equivocates*, or *forswears* himself, whether it be in asserting or promising, violates that universal *Contract* truly to signify our Meaning to another, which human *Society* implies, and upon which it is founded; and whilst he doth so, there is no Intercourse can be had with him, but he is a Creature by himself, an Enemy to the World, that lives in a State of War with all Mankind, and out of all Laws and Obligations of human *Society*: And so whilst he continues in it, and pretends to observe its natural Rights, he doth by his Equivocations and Lyes, wrong and injure all he converses with.

IV. By Virtue of our being united in *Society* we have a Right to *Credit*, and to a fair *Estimation* among one another. For the great End of human *Society* is, that by their mutual Intercourses Men might *aid* and *assist* one another; and it is for this Purpose that Men combine themselves into *Societies*, that thereby they may enjoy a delightful *Conversation*, void of Fear, Suspicion,

Suspicion, and Danger; and by *exchanging* their Labours, Counsels, and Commodities may be mutually *helpful* and *beneficial* to one another, And this End no Man can ever attain, without having a fair *Credit* and *Estimation* among those with whom he deals and Converses: For who will trust to a Man of a *lost Reputation*? Or who would willingly have any Intercourse with one whom he cannot trust and *confide* in? *Credit* is the main Sinew that holds *Society* together, and there is scarce any Conversation or Dealing between Man and Man, but what requires a mutual *Trust* and *Confidence* in one another. Since therefore all *Trust* and *Credit* is founded upon *good Repute*, every Member of our Society, who hath not *forfeited* his good Name, hath a natural Right to be well reputed and spoken of; and whosoever either by false *Witness*, publick *Slanders*, or private *Whisperings*, endeavours to attaint an innocent Man's Reputation, doth thereby *injuriously* attempt to exclude him from the *Conversation* of Men, and shut the Door of *humane Society* against him. And this, how lightly soever it may be thought of, is one of the highest Acts of *Injustice* that one Man can offer to another; for a *good Name*, saith *Solomon*, *is rather to be chosen than great Riches, and loving Favour rather than Silver and Gold*, Prov. xxi. 1. And indeed in its Consequences it is much more so to every Man, because upon his *good Name* his *Ability* to do good to himself, or Friends, or Neighbours, the *Success* of his Affairs, his best *Comforts*, chiefest *Interests*, and dearest *Conveniences* of Life, yea and sometimes his *Life* itself depends: So that in *defaming* of others, we commonly *rob*, sometimes *murder*, and always *injure* them; and there are no *Damages* so irreparable, no *Wounds* so incurable, no Scars so indelible as those of a *slanderous Tongue*. For wheresoever its venomous Arrows fall, no Eminency of Rank, Dignity of Place, Sacredness of Office, no Innocence of Life, Circumspection of Behaviour, Benignity of Nature and Deportment, can protect Men against them; no Force can resist, no Act can decline them, no Vindication assoil their mischievous Impressions, but still *aliquid adhærebit*, let the Innocence they wound be never so well cured, some Mark of Dishonour will remain. Whosoever therefore either *forges*, or *spreads*, or rashly *entertains* a Slander against any Man, doth in so doing injuriously offend against the *natural Rights* of *Society*, and is at once a Thief, a Ravisher and a Murderer; a *Robber* of the good Name, a *Deflowerer* of the Reputation, and a *Murderer* of the Honour of his Neighbour. And yet, good God, how strangely doth this *unjust* and *villainous Practice* prevail in all Societies and Conversations of Men! Among whom it is grown so common to asperse causelessly, that no Man *wonders* at it, few *dislike* it, and scarce any *detest* it, but whilst the black-mouth'd Calumniator is blustering against all that stand in his way, and exhaling his poisonous Breath from his venomous Heart; he is heard not only with *Patience*, but with *Pleasure*, and looked upon as a Man of a notable Talent, and judged very serviceable to the *Party* he is engaged in. So that now this odious *Vice* is grown a fashionable Humour, a pleasing *Entertainment*, a Knack of carrying on some curious Feat of *Policy*; and so *epidemical* is the Mischief grown, that it is dangerous for a Man who hath any Sense of *Honesty* or *Justice*, to come into any Conversation, without being tempted to wish himself sequestred from Society, and to cry out with the Prophet *Jer.* ix. 2, 3. *O that I had in the Wilderness a Lodging-Place of way-faring Men, that I might leave my People, and go from them; for they are an Assembly of treacherous Men, and they bend their Tongues like a Bow for Lyes.*

V. By Virtue of our being united in *Society*, we have a Right to *Protection* from one another: For it was for this Reason that God brought us forth in a State of *Society*, and linked us to one another by the Inclinations of our Nature; that so we who are *singly* a sort of the most *defenceless Creatures*, whom Nature hath not furnished either with the defensive or offensive Armour, which is natural to *other* Creatures, might by an *Union* of Forces be able to secure

cure ourselves against foreign Outrage and Violence; and being *associated* for this End by the Law of our Nature, we are thereby obliged, so far as we are able, to *defend* one another. All *Mankind* are one Body, *incorporated* by the Charter of *Nature*, whereby every Member is obliged to stand by and assist his Fellow, so long as he acts as a *Member*, and keeps within the *Rules* of humane Society. Whilst therefore I do not by offending others, offend against the Charter of *Nature*, I have a Right to be *defended* by every Man, so far as he hath Power and Opportunity; and whosoever offends me, ought to be looked on and proceeded with as a *publick Offender* against the Corporation of *Mankind*. For the *Whole* is concerned in every *Part*, and as he that bruiseth the Toe offends the Body, and engages every Member against him; so he who wrongfully hurts any *Member* of the human *Society*, is thereby injurious to the *Whole*, and ought to be repell'd and opposed by *every Member* of it: And he who refuses to aid his *Fellow-member*, when injuriously struck at, and it is in his Power, is a *Traytor* to the common Cause, a *falsehearted* Turn-coat and *base* Deserter of the Society of *Mankind*. He that can patiently sit still, and hear his Brother's *Name* torn in pieces by a slanderous Tongue, when it is in his Power to *purge* and *vindicate* him, robs him of the common *Rights* of a Man: He that can see his Brother's *Life* injuriously exposed, either by open Violence or secret Practice, when it is in his Power to *rescue* him, treats him like an utter *Alien* and *Foreigner* to Mankind; he that can suffer a Brother to be robb'd of his *Estate*, or defrauded in his *Property*, when it is in his Power to *defend* and *right* him, unjustly with-holds from him what he owes him by the Charter of humane *Society*; and in so doing doth not only offend against his *Brother* in particular, but also against the whole *Society* of which he is a *Part* and *Member*. So that in short, as we are all united by the God of Nature into the same *Corporation*, we are obliged in *Justice* manfully to defend each other's Lives, Estates, and Reputations; and if we *wilfully* permit any Fellow-member to be murdered, slandered, robbed, or cozened, when it is in our Power to prevent it, we do not only wrongfully with-hold from him his natural Right to be *defended* by us, but foully betray the common Interest of Mankind; for both which we shall one Day give a dear Account to the supreme Head and Sovereign of all *Societies*.

VI. *Sixthly* and *lastly*, By Virtue of our being united in *Society*, we have also a Right to share with one another in the Profits of our *Commerce* and *Intercourse*. For as of all other Creatures we are the best fitted for *Society*, by reason of that *peculiar* Faculty we have of communicating our Thoughts and Minds to one another: so of all other Creatures we stand in the greatest *need* of it, by reason of our *Insufficiency* to supply and relieve ourselves. For as for *other* Creatures, after they come into the World, they are much sooner able to help themselves than we; and after *we* are most able to help ourselves, there are a World of Necessaries and Conveniencies without which we cannot be happy, and with which we cannot be supply'd without each other's *Aid* and *Assistance*. And therefore God created us in *Society*, and imprinted *sociable Inclinations* on our Natures; that being by them combined and united together, we might be mutually *helpful* to one another, and ready to *assist* and *supply* each other, according to our several Talents and Abilities, with such Necessaries and Conveniencies of Life as the Condition of our Nature requires. This therefore being one *main End* of our Society, *viz.* to be dutiful Ministers of God's Providence towards one another, in supplying those Wants and Necessities which he hath made, and which he hath made to be supplied by our *mutual* good Offices and Ministeries; every Man hath thereupon a *Right* to be aided and assisted by every one with whom he hath any Dealing or Intercourse; and to have some Share of the Benefit of all that Exchange, Traffick, or Commerce, which passes between him and others. For every Man hath a Right to his own *Labour* and *Industry*; and therefore if another

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be benefited by mine, it is but just and equal that I should be benefited by *his*; that he should so exchange *Labour*, or *Commodities* with me, as that my Necessities should be served as well as his own; and that while he reaps what I sow, and enjoys the Harvest of *my* Labour, he should repay me such a Share of *his*, as my Convenience and Necessity calls for. But if he ingross all the Profit of our Exchange and Commerce to *himself*, he is rather a *Wen* of the Body Politick, that draws all the Nourishment to himself, and starves the neighbouring Parts, than a regular Member, that contents itself with such a Share as is proportionate to its own Bulk and Magnitude, and gladly permits his *Fellow-members* to live and thrive as well as *he*. So that for any Man in his Dealings with others, to take Advantage from their *Necessity* or *Ignorance*, to oppress or over-reach them; to use them *cruelly*, so as wilfully to damnify them, or *hardly*, so as either to rake all the Advantage to himself, or not to allow them such a competent Share of it as is necessary to support and maintain them according to their Rank and Station; is an injurious Invasion of that *natural Right*, which the very End and Design of human *Society* gives them.

And thus you see what are the *natural Rights* of Men, considered as *rational Creatures* inhabiting *mortal* Bodies, and united to one another by *natural Relations* and *Society*; all which Rights are inherent in them *antecedently* to all human Laws and Constitutions; and though there had never been any other Law but that of Nature, yet they might have justly claimed them of one another, as *eternal Dues* which no Laws can cancel, no Custom dissolve, no Circumstances make void or abrogate. So that to do justly with respect to Men's *natural Rights*, is to render them what we owe them by the Obligations of *Nature*, as they are rational Creatures; to treat them *equitably*, to do them all the *good* we can justly desire they should do to *us*, if we were in their Circumstances; quietly to permit them to *judge* for themselves, without endeavouring to tyrannize over their Minds by persecuting, censuring and reviling them, because they are not of our Opinion; to suffer them freely to comply with the Dictates of *right Reason*, and not to put them either by Force, Command, or Presumption upon any *wicked* and *unreasonable Act*; in a word, to pay them all those fair Respects that are due to the Dignity of human Nature, to treat them courteously, and humanly, and not to bespeak or use them as if they were so many Dogs, or brute Animals; these are *eternal Dues*, which every rational Creature owes to his own kind, and which we cannot withhold from one another without high *Injustice* to humane Nature. But then as we are rational Creatures inhabiting these *mortal Bodies*, we are obliged in Justice not to maim or destroy or captivate one another's Bodies; unless it be in the necessary *Defence* of our own Lives, Estates, or Liberties; not to deprive one another of our necessary Livelihood and Subsistence; but out of our Abundance to *supply* the pinching Necessities of the *Poor* and *Needy*. These things we owe one another as we are all the Tenants of God, sent down into this lower World, and quartered in these Houses of Clay; and if we rob one another of what we are thus intitled to by the present State and Condition of our Being, we are extremely *unjust* to God and to each other. Again, as we are rational Creatures united to each other by *natural Relations*, we are obliged to render to each other all those Respects and Duties, which the Nature of our *Relation* calls for; as we are Parents, to love, and instruct, and make suitable Provision for our *Children*; as we are *Children*, to love and reverence, succour and obey our *Parents*; as we are *Brethren* or *natural Kindred*, to love and honour, succour and relieve one another: And if we with-hold from each other any of these *Rights* or *Dues*, which the Nature of our Relation calls for, we make an injurious Inroad upon the most sacred Rights and Inclosures of *Nature*. Lastly, as we are rational Creatures united to one another by natural *Society*, we owe *Love* and *Peace*, *Truth* and *Credit*, *Protection* and *Participation* of Profit to one another. Whilst therefore we hate and malign, and vex

and disturb each other; whilst we lye and equivocate, and violate our *Promises* and *Oaths*; whilst we refuse to defend each other's Lives, Estates and Reputation; and *usurp* all the Profits of our Exchange and Intercourse, not allowing those whom we deal with a sufficient Share to subsist and live by; we trample upon all the *natural Rights* of human Society, and demean ourselves as open Enemies and Outlaws to Mankind.

Wherefore in the Name of God, if in this degenerate Age, whereinto we are fallen, *Christianity* hath quite lost its just Power and Dominion over us; let us be honest *Heathens* at least, though we resolve to be no longer *Christians:* If we will needs be deaf to the Voice of our *revealed* Religion, yet for Shame let us attend to the Voice of our *Nature*, and not leap down at once from the Perfections of *Christians* into the wretched Condition of *Beasts* and *Devils*. Oh? for the Love of *God* and the Honour of those noble Natures he hath given us, stop at *Men* at least, though you are fallen from *Christianity*; and do not by your Cruelty and Inhumanity, Frauds and Calumnies, Oppressions, Lyes, and shameless Perjuries, at the least approach towards that at which Humanity starts with Horror and Amazement; do not defame and scandalize your *Natures*, and render your selves a Shame and Reproach to the Name of *Men*, by these your outragious Invasions of the common *Rights* of *human Nature*.

Chap. IV.

Of Justice, *as it preserves the* Acquired *Rights of Men; and particularly those which arise from Sacred and Civil Relations.*

I Proceed now to the second Sort of *human Rights*, which Justice between Man and Man relates to, *viz.* such as are not natural to them either as *rational* Creatures, or as dwelling in *mortal Bodies*, or as joined to one another by natural *Relations*, or as naturally united in *Society*; but are *acquired* subsequently to the Rights of *Nature*, by that mutual *Intercourse* which passes between Men in their Society with one another. Which Rights though they are not *natural*, but *accidental*, are yet founded on the Rights of *Nature*, and therefore ought to be preserved as sacredly and as inviolably as *these:* For whatsoever Rights Men do *acquire* in the Performance of the common Rights of Nature, are *equivalent* with them, as being founded on the same Reasons. Now all those Rights which are not natural, are acquired one of these Ways; either, *First*, by *sacred* and *civil* Relations; or *Secondly*, by *legal* Possession; or *Thirdly*, by *personal* Accomplishments; or *Fourthly*, by outward *Rank* and *Quality*; or *Fifthly*, by *Bargaining* and *Compact*.

I. There are some Rights acquired by *sacred* and *civil* Relations, and of these there are several Sorts.

First, There is the Relation of *Sovereign* and *Subject*.
Secondly, Of *subordinate* Magistrates to the *Sovereign* and *People*.
Thirdly, Of *Pastors* and *People*.
Fourthly, Of *Husband* and *Wife*.
Fifthly, Of *Friend* and *Friend*.
Sixthly, Of *Masters* and *Servants*.
Seventhly, Of *Truster* and *Trustee*.
Eighthly, Of *Benefactor* and *Receiver*.
Ninthly, There is the Relation of *Debtor* and *Creditor:* Of the proper Rights of each of which Relations I shall give as brief an Account as I can.

I. There is the Relation of *Sovereign* and *Subject*; which is the highest and most sacred of all those Relations that are not *natural*. For God being the supreme Lord and Sovereign of the World, all lawful Power and Authority must be derived from *him*; for as in particular Kingdoms the *King* is the Fountain of Authority, from whence executive Power descends upon *subordinate* Magistrates: So in the universal Monarchy of the World, *God* is the Fountain of all Power and Dominion; from whom all Authority and Right of Government descends upon *Princes* and *Governours*; and whosoever exercises Dominion in the World without *divine* Authority, is an *Usurper* in the Kingdom of God. But then the Derivation of this Authority from him is either *immediate*, or *mediate*: those who are supreme under him derive their Authority *immediately* from him, and are the *Channels* by whose Mediation he derives Authority to their *subordinate* Magistrates; so that the *subordinate* Magistrates of particular Kingdoms derive their Authority from *God* by the Hands of their *Kings*, but the Kings themselves derive theirs from God's own Hands *immediately*: And whatever the particular Form of any Government be, whether it be *Monarchy*, or *Polyarchy*, that which is *supreme* in it under God must be immediately from him. So far from true is that modern Maxim of some Jesuited Politicians, *viz. That Civil Government is the People's Creature*; which by necessary Consequence excludes *God* from being the supreme Governour of the World; for if he be absolutely supreme, there is none can be supreme immediately under him, but by an Authority derived *immediately* from him. So that the Relation of *Sovereign* hath this Right unalienably appendant to it, *to be accountable to none but God*; from whom alone it holds its Authority, and to whom alone it is subjected. And therefore for *Subjects* to call their *Sovereign* to Account, is both to arraign God's Authority, and to invade his *Peculiar*; to set our selves down in his Throne, and summon his Authority before us, and require it to submit its *awful* Head to our Doom and Sentence; which is as high and impious an Injustice, as can be offered either to God, or Man; and (till *Popery*, that Fardle of religious Impostures, set *Treason* and *Rebellion* abroach) as abhorrent to all Christian *Principles* and *Practices*; as Hell is to Heaven, or Darkness to Light. But then since Sovereigns are God's *Vicegerents*, and do reign by his Authority, they have also an inseparable *Right* to be *obeyed* in all Things, wherein they do not interfere with the Commands of God; for in obeying *them* we obey *God*, who commands by their Mouths, and wills by their Laws, and Edicts: And as he who refuses to obey the *Vice-Roy*'s command, doth in so doing disobey the *King* himself, unless he commands the contrary; so he who disobeys his *Sovereign* who is God's Vice-Roy, doth in so doing disobey *God*, unless it be where God hath countermanded him. So that while he commands only lawful Things, he hath an *undoubted Right* to be obeyed; because his Commands are stamped with divine Authority, and are thereby rendered sacred, and inviolable. Again, since Sovereigns are the *supreme Representatives* of God's Power and Majesty upon Earth, as being his *immediate* Substitutes; they have also an *unalienable Right* to be *honoured* and *reverenced* by their Subjects, because they bear God's Character, and do shine with the Rays of His Majesty; before which every Creature in Heaven and Earth ought to bow and lie prostrate: And therefore for Subjects to *contemn* and *vilify* their Sovereigns, and to expose their Faults, and uncover their Nakedness, and lampoon and libel their Persons and Actions, is an Affront to *God*'s own Majesty, and an unjust and impious *Prophanation* of that divine Character they bear about them. Once more; since Sovereigns are substituted by God for the *common Good*, to protect the Innocent, and avenge the Injured, and guard the Rights of their People against foreign and intestine Fraud and Violence; they must hereupon have an undoubted Right to be *aided* and *assisted* by their Subjects; because without their Aid, it will be impossible for them to accomplish the *Ends* of their Sovereignty. And therefore

fore for Subjects to *refuse* to aid their Sovereign with their Purses, or Persons, when legally required, or by any indirect Means to *withdraw* themselves from his Assistance, whenever his Necessities call for it, is to detain from him a *just Right* that is owing to his Character and Relation. And as these Rights are all implied in the Relation of a *Sovereign*, so are there others implied in the Relation of a *Subject*; for sovereign Power being ordained by God for a *publick Good*, to guard and defend the Innocent, to shelter and relieve the Oppressed, to fence and propagate true Religion, and adjust and balance private Rights and Interests; every *Subject* hath a Right to be *protected* by it, so far as it is able, in his Person and Legal Rights, in his *just* Liberties and Privileges, and sincere Profession of *true* Religion; and that Sovereign who doth not employ his Power to these Purposes, but through wilful and affected Error, or Ignorance imposes a *false* Religion on his People; or betrays, oppresses, or inslaves them himself, or permits others to do it either out of Malice, or Carelesness, is an *injurious Invader* of their Rights and Properties; and though he be not accountable to any earthly Tribunal, shall one Day answer for it at the Tribunal of God.

II. There is the Relation of *subordinate Magistrates* to the *Sovereign* and *People*, such are the Judges and Justices, the Governours of Towns, Cities and Provinces, and the like; who by Virtue of that Authority, which is stamped upon them, and which they derive, as I told you from God, who is the Head and Spring of all Power and Dominion, have by Virtue of that a Right to be *honoured* and *reverenced* and *obeyed* by the People according to the Degree and Extent of their Authority. For where-ever it is placed, *Authority* is a sacred Thing; as being a Ray, and Impress of the Divine Majesty, and as such may justly claim *Honour* and *Reverence* from all Men; and whoever contemns the *lowest* Degree of it, offers an Affront to the *highest*. He who contemns *subordinate* Magistrates who are vested with the King's Authority, doth therein contemn the *King*; and he who contemns the *King*, who is vested with God's Authority, doth therein contemn *God*. Whatsoever therefore the personal Faults and Defects of Magistrates may be, Men ought to consider that their Authority is a sacred thing, and, as such, challenges their *Reverence* and *Obedience* by an unalienable Right; and that therefore to behave themselves frowardly, stubbornly, or irreverently towards a lawful Magistrate, is to detain from him his *Rights*, and offer an unjust Affront to his Character, which, how good soever they may be in other Instances, doth in this bespeak them highly *dishonest* and *injurious*. And as the Relation of *subordinate* Magistrates intitles them to the People's *Reverence* and *Obedience*; so the Relation which the *Prince* and *People* bear to them, intitles them both to their *Fidelity*, *Vigilance* and *Justice*. For subordinate Magistrates are the King's *Trustees* for himself and his People; and in their Hands he deposits the Honour, Security and Rights of his own Crown and Dominion, together with the Safeguard and Protection of the just and legal Rights of his People. So that upon their Acceptance of this *Trust*, by which they engage themselves faithfully to discharge it, the King acquires a *Right* to their faithful and vigilant *Care*, to see that his Authority be *reverenced*, his Laws *obeyed*, his Person, Government and Properties *secured*; the People acquire a Right to be *protected* by them in their Persons, Reputations, Liberties and Estates; and so far as they are wilfully failing either towards the King, or the People, in any of these Matters, they do *unjustly* detain the King's or the Peoples *Rights*, or both; they betray the *Trust* committed to them, falsify their own *Engagements*, and under the *Mask* of Authority are publick Robbers of Mankind.

III. There is the Relation of *Pastors* and *People*; for since out of his tender Care to the *Souls* of Men, God hath instituted an *Order* of Men to administer to them those holy Ordinances, by which he conveys his Grace and Spirit, to instruct them in their Duties, admonish them of their Errors, and

warn them of their Dangers, and guide them to *eternal Happiness*; there doth from hence arise a near and *sacred Relation* between the People and their respective *Guides* and *Pastors*. They are joined together by the Ties and Obligations of *Religion*, which gives them a mutual Right in one another; and which gives the *Pastor* a Right to be diligently *attended* to by the *People* in his religious Ministrations, to be construed in the best Sense, and fairly treated and complied with in all his pious Reproofs and Admonitions, to be honoured and reverenced for his *Works* sake, to partake with the People in their *Temporals*, as they do with him in his *Spirituals*, and to be supported by them, according to their Ability, with a fair and honourable *Maintenance*; and they who are wanting to their *Pastor* in any of these Particulars, deprive him of that which is as much his *Right* in *Conscience*, as any thing can be theirs in *Law*. And then as for the *People*, They have also a Right to have *holy Things* duly and regularly administred to them by their *Pastor*, to be taught and instructed by him with wholsome Doctrine and Example, to be prudently admonished of their Faults and Dangers, and counselled and advised by him in all their *spiritual* Straits and Exigencies; and he who is wilfully failing in the faithful Discharge and Payment of these *Dues* is a Thief and a Robber of his Peoples *Souls*; that so far as in him lies, rifles them of that which ought to be dearer to them than their Estates, or Lives, even the *Bread of Life* without which they cannot live, but must starve and perish for ever; and if they do, it is by his *unjust Neglect* to render them their Dues, and their Blood will be required at his Hands.

IV. There is the Relation of *Husband* and *Wife*, who having mutually bestowed themselves upon each other, and sealed the Deed by *Matrimonial Vow*, are thereby interwoven into one another and morally compounded into one Person. For *Marriage* is an Union of Persons, and Incorporation of two into one by moral Ties and Ligaments: So that between *Husband* and *Wife* there is the nearest and dearest Union that can be between two natural Persons; they are each other's *Property* and *Inclosure*, having by mutual Vows made over and exchanged themselves for one another, by Virtue of which they have a *mutual* Right in each other's Person, and cannot bestow themselves away from one another, without being guilty of the most outrageous *Injustice*. For the Husband is one half of the Wife, and the Wife of the Husband; and therefore whenever they *alienate* themselves from each other, they rob one another of one half of themselves. And it is this that doth so much inhance the Sin of *Adultery* beyond that of simple *Fornication*; because when the Husband disposes his Body to another Woman, or contrariwise, he is not only guilty of an unbounded, rambling *Lust*, which is the proper Malignity of simple Fornication, but also of a foul and monstrous *Injustice*. For he having made himself his *Wife*'s by Promise and Vow, cannot give away himself from her without being impiously *injurious*, without robbing God of his Vow, and robbing her of himself, for whom she exchanged herself. And consequently they who endeavour to *seduce* the Wife from the Husband, or the Husband from the Wife, are guilty of a horrid *Injustice*, in attempting to rob God and Man of that which is most dear and precious to them, and to break through Vows and sacred Fences to trespass on their Neighbour's Inclosure, which how common soever it may be in this degenerate Age, is certainly one of the blackest *Villanies* in Nature. And as Husband and Wife have a mutual *Right* to each others *Persons*, so they have also to each others dearest *Love* and *Affection*: For no Relation doth so nearly intitle and interest Persons in one another as that of *Marriage*; nor consequently, that gives them so great a Right and Title to each others Hearts and Affections. Matth. xix. 5. *For this Cause shall a Man leave Father and Mother, and shall cleave to his Wife, and they two shall be one Flesh*; and then *no Man ever yet hated his own Flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it*, saith the Apostle exhorting to matrimonial Love, *Eph.* v. 29. Husband and Wife are *one* by a moral Union of Persons, and therefore for them to hate and abuse *one another*

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would be as unnatural, as for a Man to hate and tear his *own Flesh*. Again, As they have a mutual Right to each other's *Persons* and *Affections*, so they have also to each other's *Help* and *Assistance:* Hence the Apostle calls them *Yoke-fellows*, implying, that they ought to draw *together*, and *mutually* assist one another in their common Concerns and Interests. For in the Union of their *Persons* their *Interest* is combined and united; so that *that* which is the one's is the other's: Their *Meums* and *Tuums* are confounded together, and their Fortunes make a common Stock wherein they are *Partners* with one another, and are intitled to the promiscuous Use and Enjoyment of it. And being Sharers in the same Interest, they ought to be mutually *helpful* and bear a Part of each others *Cares* and *Burdens:* For when they are both intitled to the same Fortunes and Interests, it is by no Means just, that the one like a slothful Drone should dwell at Ease in the Hive, and devour the Hony, whilst the other like a laborious Bee goes forth and toils to gather it. These are the common *Rights* and *Dues*, which Husband and Wife owe one to another: But then the *Husband* having the Superiority, hath a Right to be *reverenced* and *obeyed* by his *Wife* in all things that are fair and honest, to be entertained with a gentle Behaviour, addressed to with soft Entreaties, and treated with a sweet Compliance; and therefore for a Woman to behave herself *perversly* towards her Husband, to controul his Will in indifferent Matters, and if he will not yield, to teaze and weary him with her sour Looks, or clamorous Words, or provoking Deportment, is not only a great *Dishonour* to her own Head, but a high and shameful *Injustice*, for which she must one Day account to God, as well as for her other *Iniquities*. And then on the other Hand, the *Wife* being no otherwise *inferiour* to the *Husband*, than the *Body* is to the *Soul*, or the Bosom to the Head, ought not to be treated by him as his *Slave* and *Servant*, but as a Part of *himself*, *i. e.* with all Lenity and Forbearance, Tenderness and Complaisance; and, as *Plutarch* saith, *the Husband's Empire over the Wife ought to be soft and chearful*, to be alloyed and sweeten'd with the greatest Condescension and Officiousness: And that Soul is not more unrighteous to its *Body*, that starves, or macerates, or evil intreats it; than the Husband is to his Wife, who behaves himself *churlishly*, *sourly*, or *imperiously* towards her. *Col.* iii. 19. *Husbands love your Wives*, saith the Apostle, *and be not bitter against them*, *i. e.* be not morose and rough, stern and severe in your Carriage towards them; but be sure you use them with all that honourable *Regard*, prudent *Compliance* and endearing *Familiarity* that is due to them as they are Parts of *yourselves*.

V. There is the Relation of *Friend* and *Friend*, which I put next to that of *Husband* and *Wife*, because it is next to it in Respect of Nearness and Affinity. For *Friendship* is the Marriage of *Souls*, and *Interests* and *Counsels*, the Union or Exchange of Hearts, the Clasp of mutual Affections, or true Love-knot that ties Mens Hearts and Minds together. For as for the *Matter* of Friendship, it is Love and Charity; but as for the *Form* of it, it is Charity *appropriated* to such particular Persons; so that Charity is Friendship in *common*, and Friendship is Charity *inclosed*. In a Word, Charity is Friendship *expanded*, like the Force of the Sun when he rises above the Horizon, and shines upon the World; but Charity is Friendship *contracted*, like the Rays of that glorious Light drawn into the Center of a Burning-glass, and made more warm and active by their Union. When therefore Men have contracted particular *Friendships*, and espoused their Souls and Minds to one another, there doth from thence arise a *new Relation* between them beyond what common Charity creates; from which new *Relation* there accrue *new Rights* to the related Parties. For *mutual Friendship* is not a *Metaphysical* Nothing, created meerly for *Contemplation*, for such as are contracted in its holy Bands to stare upon each other's Faces, and make Dialogues of News and Prettinesses, or to look Babies in one anothers Eyes; but it is a substantial and important *Virtue*, fitted for the noblest Purposes, to be an Alloy to our *Sorrows*, an Ease to our

our *Passions*, a Discharge of our *Oppressions*, a Sanctuary to our *Calamities*, a Counsellor of our *Doubts*, a Repository of our *Secrets*, and an Improvement of our *Meditations*; a Champion to our *Innocence*, and an Advocate for our *Interest* both with God and Men; to these brave Purposes serves every real *Friendship*, and without these it is only the empty *Name* and *Shadow* of Friendship. When therefore Men combine and unite together in this close and near *Relation*, they give each other a Right to themselves to all the above-named *Uses* and *Purposes*, to be *Guides* and *Comforts* to each other in their Doubts and Sorrows, *Monitors* and *Remembrancers* in their Errors and Oblivions, *Shelters* and *Refuges* in their Oppressions and Calamities, and faithful *Trustees* and *Secretaries* to each others Confidences and Thoughts. These are the great *Rights* of Friendship, which whosoever detains or with-holds from his Friend is a *false* and *unjust* Correspondent in that brave and noble *Relation*: For, when we mutually contract particular Friendship with one another, it is to *these* great Purposes, or it is not *Friendship*; and, when to *these* Purposes we have once joined Hands, and struck particular Amities with one another, we are bound by the Ties of common *Honesty* and *Justice*, so far as we are able, to make good our Contract to all those Intents and Purposes it extends to.

VI. There is the Relation of *Masters* and *Servants*. For between Master and Servant there are *mutual Engagements*, which are either expressed in their Contract, or implied in their Relation; and whether there be any formal Contract between them or no, their very *Relation* is an implicite Bargain, and supposes a mutual Engagement to one another. By being a *Servant* to another, I put my self into his Hands and Disposal, and devote my Time, and Pains and Labour to him; by Virtue of which he acquires a just *Right* to my Time and Service, my Fidelity and chearful Obedience: And therefore if either by Gaming, Loitering, or Company-keeping, I alienate my *Time* from him; or if by my Sloth and Idleness I rob him of my *Pains* and *Labour*, or by my hypocritical Eye-Service, or betraying his Trusts, or wasting or embezzling his Goods, I deprive him of my *Truth* and *Fidelity*; or if lastly by my Stubbornness and Obstinacy I purloin from him my Duty and *Obedience*, I am a *dishonest* and *unjust* Servant, and however I may escape now, must one Day expect to give an Account to my just and all-seeing Master in Heaven. Accordingly in Scripture Servants are enjoined to *obey their Masters in all Things*, Col. iii. 22. and to *do Service to them with Good-will*, Eph. vi. 7. to serve them with *Singleness of Heart*, not to purloin their Goods, or answer them again in a froward and surly Manner, *Tit.* ii. 9, 10. Since then they stand obliged to these Duties, both by Precept of *Scripture* and the natural Engagement of their *Relation*, it is plain they cannot act contrary thereunto, without openly transgressing the Laws of *God*, and trespassing on the Rights of *Men*. And so on the other Hand, by being a *Master* to another, I stand engaged to *maintain* and *protect* him in my Service, to pay him the Wages, or teach him the *Trade* for which he serves me; not to out-task his Ability, nor impose any thing on him but what is *tolerable* and *merciful*; to correct him with Gentleness, Prudence, and Mercy, and not to restrain him too rigidly from fitting and healthful *Recreation*; and above all, to admonish him of his Faults, instruct him in his Duty, and give him all chearful Encouragements to *well-doing*. For I ought to consider, that I am Master of a *Man* of the same Kind with my self, that hath a Right upon that Account to be treated *humanly*; which if I do not, instead of being a just *Master*, I am a savage *Tyrant*; and also I should consider that I am Master of an *immortal Man*, who upon that Account hath a Right to be treated *religiously*, that hath a Soul to be saved, and an eternal Interest to be secured; which if I take no Care of, I treat him rather as my *Dog* than my *Servant*, as a Beast that *perishes*, than as a Man that is to live for ever. So that if any of these Ways I am wanting to my Servant, I am a *Transgressor* of that Rule of Righteousness that is founded in my Relation to him; and though the crying Necessities of his Soul and Body cannot penetrate my Ears, nor move my Adamantine

mantine Bowels to a more just and pious Treatment; yet the Cry of those Wrongs and Injuries I do him by my unjust, inhumane and irreligious Usage, will certainly penetrate the Ears of *God*, and provoke his Vengeance to a dire *Retribution* of it.

VII. There is the Relation of *Trustees* to those that trust them: For he who trusts another doth thereby create a very near and intimate Relation to him: So far forth as he trusts him, he puts his Case into his Hands, and deposites his Interest in his Disposal, and thereby creates him his Proxy, or his *second self*. So that when I accept of the Trust which another offers me, whether it be to be an *Arbitrator* in his Cause, or an *Executor* of his Will, or a *Guardian* to his Children, or a *Keeper* of any *Pledge* or *Depositum* he commits to me, I do thereby enter into a close Alliance and Relation with him; I put on his Person, engage to supply his Place, to act as his Representative, or *alter ego*, and so far as he trusts and confides in me, to do for him as if the Case were *my own*, to determine his Cause, to execute his Will, and dispose of his Children, and secure his Pledges to him, as if I were *himself*, and those were all *my own*. And by entring into this near Relation to him, I give him a Right, so far forth as he intrusts me, to my *Skill* and *Care*, *Fidelity* and *Industry*; all which by putting on his Person I have listed and engaged in his Service. So that if by my own *Carelesness* or *Neglect*, I suffer any of his Trusts to miscarry, I am highly *dishonest* and *injurious* to him; because I undertook to do for him all that I can suppose he would have done for himself, had he been Master of my Skill and Ability. But if for a Bribe, or to serve my Interest, I betray the *Trust* he committed to me, or convert it to my own Advantage, I rob him more *basely* and *infamously*, than if I *bad him stand*, and demanded his Purse on the *High-way:* For then I had robb'd him in the Person of an *Enemy*, but now I rob him in his *own*, and make use of that Trust to betray his Interest, by which I was as much obliged to *secure* and defend it, as if I had exchanged Persons with him, and his Interest were my own; and to betray his Interest for my own Advantage, when he had made me his *second self*, and I had engaged myself to be so, is a piece of the most *inhumane* and *disingenuous* Perfidiousness and Injustice; because by thus doing I abuse his good Opinion of me, for which I stand obliged to him, into an Occasion of *betraying* him. So that in effect I have borrowed his Person, which he freely sent me, only to *rob* and *despoil* him; and from his Confidence in my Truth and Fidelity, by which he was justly intitled to it, have *basely* taken Occasion to defraud him of that *Trust*, which he freely deposited in my Hands and Disposal.

VIII. There is the Relation of the *Benefactor* to the *Receiver*. For he who doth good to another, doth thereby contract a *Relation* to him; because in doing good to him he espouses his Interest, and in espousing his Interest he espouses himself; he performs the Part of his Brother, of his Father, and his God, whose highest Character and *Eulogium* is to *be good*, and to *do good*; and consequently in all these Capacities he stands related to him. And by Virtue of this *Relation* he acquires a Right in the Person obliged to be *esteemed* and *beloved* by him; to be pray'd for and requited by him, whenever he hath Opportunity and Ability. For there is always a Right acquir'd by *Benefits*, where there was none antecedently: He who doth a good Turn deserves and merits of him that receives it; and what he deserves, he hath a Right to. So that every *Receiver* is *Debtor* to his *Benefactor*; he *owes* him all the Good he receives from him; and is always *obliged* to a thankful Acknowledgment, and whenever he hath Opportunity to an equivalent Requital. For though my Benefactor *gives* me his Benefit freely, as having no need of it himself, or at least not so much as I, and therefore cannot legally demand a *Repayment* of it; yet whatsoever he *gives* me he *deserves* of me, and whenever our *Circumstances* change, and he hath *my* Need, and I *his* Ability, I am in Conscience as much obliged to repay it, as if he had lent me upon Bond. In this Case my Ability is *Security* for

for the Benefit I owe him, and his Need is a just *Demand* of it; and therefore since what he hath merited of me is his *Due*, I am extremely unjust, if when his Needs do demand it, I do not repay him so far as I am able. But if either I am not able to repay him an equivalent Benefit, or he hath no need or occasion for it, I am bound in Justice to express my *Gratitude* to him in thankful Remembrances and Acknowledgments, to take all fair Occasions to own and celebrate his Goodness, and by all the little Services I can render him to express a forward *Willingness* to make him a full Requital. For as in Matter of *Debt*, he who cannot pay *all* must compound and pay so far as he is *able*; so in the Matter of *Benefits*, he who cannot make a compleat Requital, is obliged in justice to make some small *Composition*, and pay so much in the *Pound* as his Ability extends to; and if he can do no more, to express a *grateful Sense* of them, and give thankful *Words* for beneficial *Deeds*; which all generous Benefactors esteem the *noblest Requital*. But he who receives Benefits without some thankful Acknowledgment, acts the Part of a *Swine*, that greedily devours the Acorns, and never looks up towards the Tree from whence they drop: And he who requites Benefits with Injuries, acts the Part of a *Devil*, that would fain have thrown that blessed Being out of Heaven, who created and placed him in it.

IX. *Ninthly* and *lastly*, There is the Relation of *Creditor* and *Debtor*: For he who lends to another Man, and gives him Credit either for Money or Commodities, or accepts of his Security for what he lends to another, doth thereby contract a Relation to him; by which he acquires a Right to be justly *repay'd* according to Contract and Agreement. For lending and crediting doth not alienate the *Property*; the Debtor hath only a Right to use what he borrows for his present *Conveniency* or *Necessity*, but the Property remains in the Hands of the *Creditor*, who hath the same Right to it as when it was in his own Possession. And it being so, the Rule of *Common Justice* obliges us that we do not borrow more than we have a fair Prospect of *Repaying*; unless he that credits us *knows* our Inability, and is willing to run the Hazard. For he who engages himself in Debt beyond what he can reasonably hope to *repay*, takes that from his Creditor upon Promise of Payment, which he knows he is never likely to *restore* him, which is at least as high an *Injustice*, as if he had taken it by *Force* and *Violence*. And the same is to be said of borrowing upon *false* or *insufficient* Securities, such as bad Mortgages, counterfeit Pawns, or insolvent Bonds-men; for he who takes up his Neighbour's Goods or Money upon such Securities, as he knows are incapable of *repaying* him, doth as manifestly wrong him, as if he had taken them by *Stealth*, or *Robbery*. And since our Debts are our Creditor's Rights, if we would be just Debtors, we must neither reckon what we owe to be our own; nor so dispose of it, as to put it out of our Power to restore it to the true *Proprietor*: He that hath so much of his own, and so much of other Mens, ought not to spend, or give, as if it were all his own. For if he that hath borrowed one thousand Pounds and is worth another, lives to the utmost Heighth and Proportion of two Thousand, he must necessarily spend upon what he hath borrowed, and put it out of his Power to restore it; and in so doing *rob* and *despoil* his Creditor, to maintain himself in his *Prodigality*. And as Debtors ought to be careful so to dispose of what they owe, as that they may be able to repay it; so they ought to be no less careful to repay it upon due *Demand*, or according to *Contract* and *Agreement*. For as it is unjust to deprive a Creditor of his *Money*, so it is unjust to deprive him of the *Use* and *Possession* of it, any *longer* than he consents and agrees to it; because as he hath Right to his Money, so he hath Right to possess and use it. And therefore for Debtors to *defer* and *protract* their Payments without their Creditors Consent, when it is in their Power to discharge them, to put them upon fruitless Attendances, and make Advantages of their Money against their Consent, and beyond their *Contracts* and *Agreements*, is a Degree of Injustice next to that of robbing and *despoiling* them of

it; becauſe by thus doing they do not only force their Creditors to waſte their Time in tedious Attendances, and take them off from their other Buſineſſes, but alſo rob them of the *Uſe* and *Poſſeſſion* of their Money, which they have as much Right to, as to the Money it ſelf. And if to defer Payment be ſo unrighteous in a Debtor, then to *refuſe* and *deny* it, or take indirect Courſes either to *abate*, or *avoid* it, is much more unrighteous; becauſe this is not only to deprive a Creditor of the preſent *Uſe* and *Poſſeſſion* of his Property, but of his *Property* too; and how can that Man call any thing he poſſeſſes his *own* Right and Property, whilſt he thus denies another *his?* So that by an indiſpenſable Rule of Juſtice, every Debtor is obliged rather to ſtrip himſelf of all, and caſt himſelf naked on the *Providence* of God; than by *denying* his Debts, or indirectly *ſhifting* the Payment of them, to feather his Neſt with the Spoils of his *Neighbour*. When therefore by *refuſing* to pay what we owe, we force our Creditors upon coſtly, or troubleſome *Suits* to recover their own; or by pleading *Protections*, or ſheltering our ſelves in a *Priſon*, we avoid being forced to it by Law; or by fraudulent *Breakings*, we neceſſitate them to compound our Debts, and accept a Part for the whole; which ſoever of theſe ways we take, I ſay, to deprive our Creditors of their Rights, we are inexcuſably *diſhoneſt*, and *unrighteous*. And though by theſe, or ſuch like *knaviſh Evaſions*, we may force them to acquit and diſcharge us, yet we cannot force *God* in whoſe Book of Accounts our *Debts* are recorded, as well as in *theirs*; and it concerns us ſadly to conſider, that there is nothing can croſs or cancel them *there*, but only a full *Reſtitution*; and that if they are not cancelled *there*, all the Tricks and Evaſions in the World will never be able to ſecure us from a diſmal *Reckoning*, and a more diſmal *Execution*.

And thus you ſee what thoſe acquired Rights are, which are due from Man to Man upon Account of their *civil* and *ſacred* Relations.

Chap. V.

Of Juſtice *as it preſerves the Rights of Men acquired by* Legal Poſſeſſion.

II. THERE are other Rights acquired by *legal Poſſeſſion*. For when there was but *one* Man, he was Lord and Proprietor of *all* this lower World; but when he had propagated a *Family* from his Loyns, and that *Family* was by degrees branched into ſeveral *Tribes*; he ſent forth theſe *Tribes* under the Conduct of their Heads, Fathers, and Princes, to go and take *Poſſeſſion* of ſuch and ſuch Portions of his Earth, as their Numbers, Neceſſities and Conveniences required; which when they had done, the Prince and Father of each Tribe *divided* his Land among the Members of it, and *ſhared* it into particular *Properties*, proportionable to the Merit, or Number of the particular Families contained in it; and when any of theſe Tribes became too *numerous* and *burthenſome* to the Land that was thus divided among them, they ſent forth Colonies from among themſelves, to take *Poſſeſſion* of the next unpeopled Country bordering upon them; which when they had done, the *Leader* of the Colony divided it among his *Followers*; and ſo as they increaſed and multiplied, they ſpread themſelves from Country to Country, till they had ſhared the World into *Nations*, and divided the *Nations* into diſtinct and particular *Properties*, and Families. And this Diviſion was the *Original Law*, by which each Family claimed as its *Property* the Share that was allotted to it: And ſince the *Father* of Mankind was intitled by *God*, who is the *ſupreme Proprietor*, to all this terreſtrial Globe, he had an undoubted Right to *divide* it

it among the ſeveral Tribes that deſcended from him; and therefore ſince he impowered the *Heads* and *Princes* of his Tribes, to take *Poſſeſſion* of ſuch and ſuch Portions, and *divide* it among their Families; not only each *particular Tribe* had an undoubted *Right* to the Portion allotted to it by him that was Head of them all, but each particular *Family* had an undoubted Right to the *Share* that was allotted to it, by him that was the *Head* of the Tribe it belonged to. And thus, you ſee the firſt *Diviſion* of the World among Men was the great *Law* of *Property*; and that whatſoever Men were poſſeſſed of by it, they had an undoubted *Right* and *Title* to; and upon this Law all the *Meum's* and *Tuum's*, the particular *Rights* and *Properties* that are now in the World are *founded*. For though in proceſs of Time not only the *Tribes* and *Colonies* incroach'd upon one another, till the ſtronger by ſwallowing up the weaker grew into *Kingdoms* and *Empires*; but even the particular Families alſo of theſe *Tribes* and *Colonies* incroach'd upon each other, and either by Fraud or Oppreſſion robbed their Neighbours of their *Original Share*; ſo that thoſe Rights and Properties which were made by the *Primitive Diviſions*, ſeem for the moſt Part, if not altogether extinguiſh'd; yet it is to be conſider'd that the Laws now extant do ſuppoſe all *Alienations* of *Property* from the firſt Owners to have been made according to that *Original Law* of Diviſion; which Law did not ſo *unalienably* entail on thoſe Tribes and Families their appropriate *Shares*, but that they might either *ſell* or *give* them away, or *forfeit* them; and if either of theſe ways thoſe Shares have paſſed through all ſucceſſive Generations till now from Tribe to Tribe, or Family to Family, the *preſent Poſſeſſors* are juſtly intitled to them by that *Original Law* of Diviſion. And that they have thus paſſed, *all Laws* now extant do ſuppoſe: The Law of *Nations* ſuppoſes thoſe Countries that are held by Right of *Conqueſt*, to have been juſtly *forfeited* to the Conqueror; and that unleſs they are ſo, his Conqueſt is *Robbery*, and not *Right*: The municipal Laws of *Countries* do ſuppoſe the Eſtates of particular Families to be held by the Right of *Donation* or *Purchaſe* from the true *Proprietor*, and that unleſs they are ſo, their firſt Poſſeſſion was a *Theft* and not a *Right*: And therefore neither the Law of *Nations*, nor the Law of *Countries* do allow either Conquerors, or *Families* to be *rightful Poſſeſſors* of their Conqueſts, and Eſtates, ſo long as there appears any *juſt Claim* againſt them. But though the firſt Poſſeſſion ſhould be obtained either by *unjuſt* Conqueſt, or by *Fraud* and *Oppreſſion*; yet if it continue in the Lineage or Family of the unjuſt Poſſeſſor, till all *juſt* Claim againſt it be *extinguiſh'd*, the Law muſt ſuppoſe it to be obtained *juſtly*, becauſe there *appears* no Evidence to the contrary. And indeed when a *Dominion*, or an *Eſtate*, which was at firſt unjuſtly obtained, hath been ſo long *ſucceſſively* poſſeſſed, as that no Man can produce a *juſt* Claim and Title to it, it muſt be either the preſent Poſſeſſor's, or no Body's: But then when *God*, who is the *ſupreme Proprietor* of all, doth by his providential Permiſſion continue an *ill-got* Poſſeſſion, till all lawful Claim to it is worn out, he doth thereby intitle the *preſent Poſſeſſor* to it, and creates it his *Right* and *Property*. For though God's *Providence* can be no Rule againſt his *revealed Will*, nor conſequently can authorize any Man to poſſeſs what another hath a juſt Claim to, becauſe his revealed Will forbids it; yet it is to be conſidered, that when no Man can juſtly Claim what I poſſeſs, I wrong no Man in poſſeſſing it, and conſequently am in no wiſe forbidden it by God's revealed Will: And therefore in this Caſe by his *providential Continuance* of the Inheritance of it to me, he gives me free leave to poſſeſs it; and that *Leave* is an implicit Conveyance of a juſt *Right* and *Title* to it. So that *Legal Poſſeſſion*, when there is no *juſt* or *legal Claim* againſt it, is an undoubted Right, a Right founded on the free Donation of *God*, who is the *ſupreme Proprietor* of all things: And therefore *Juſtice* obliges us not to rob, or deprive Men of what they are intitled to by *Law*; nor to deſpoil any Man by Stealth, or ſtrip him by Violence, or defraud him by Craft and cunning Inſinuation

of any *Right* or *Property* to which the *Law* intitles him; because by thus doing we do not only wrong Man of that Right which by *legal Conveyance* he derives from God, but we also wrong *God* himself, by presuming to alienate *his* Bequests, and to reverse and cancel his Donations. For he who by Stealth, or Robbery, or Fraud, deprives another of his Property, doth impiously invade *God's Right* of bestowing his own where he pleases; and refuses to stand to that Division, and Allotment which *his Providence* hath made in his own World: He doth in effect declare in his Actions, that God hath nothing to do to share his World among his Creatures, that he will not endure him to reign Lord and Master in his own Family of Beings, nor allow *his Providence* to carve and distribute his own Bread and Meat among his Children; but that he will snatch from every one's Trencher, and carve what he pleases for himself out of every Man's Commons and Allowance. So that to deprive another, you see, of what he is legally possess'd of, is a high, and crying Injustice against *God* and *Men*: For he that will needs have more of God's Goods than God hath given him, is an *impious Robber* of God; and he that will needs have those Goods of God which he hath given to another, must be an unjust *Robber* of Man. If therefore we have injuriously deprived another of his legal Rights, we are bound by all the Ties of *Religion* towards God, and of *Honesty* towards Men, to make what *Restitution* we are able: For it is certain that my wrongful *Seisure* of what is another Man's doth not alienate his *Right* to it, so that he hath the same *Right* to it while I keep it from him, as he had at first when I took it from him, and consequently till I *restore* it to him, I persist to wrong him of it; and my detaining it is a continued *Repetition* of that Fraud, or Theft, or Oppression, by which I wrongfully seized it. And whilst I thus persist in the *Sin*, the *Guilt* of it abides upon me; and I am justly responsible to the Tribunal of Heaven, for being a Robber of God and Men. Whilst therefore I unjustly *detain* what is another's Right, I keep the Earnest-penny, which the Devil gave me to intitle him to my Soul for ever; and so long as I possess the Spoils of my injured Brother, I maintain so many *Evidences* to give Testimony against me, and to raise a Cry on me as high as the Tribunal of God.

Chap. VI.

Of Justice *in Reference to the Rights acquired by personal* Endowments, *or outward* Rank.

III. THere are other *Rights* acquired by *personal Accomplishments*, such as Wisdom and Learning, Integrity and Courage, Generosity and Goodness, which do naturally render Men exceeding useful and beneficial to the World; and therefore by these Men acquire a just *Right* to be highly esteem'd and honour'd by all that know them. For Praise and Honour are the natural *Dues*, the Birthright and Patrimony of Excellency; which by its own inherent *Merit* challenges Esteem and Veneration: He who excels another hath a *Right* to be preferr'd before him in the Esteem and Value of the World; to have his Light reflected with a more glorious Splendour, and his Excellencies resounded with higher *Eulogiums*. Now the Excellency of a Man consists in the Graces and Ornaments of his *Mind*; and as we do not esteem a Ship to be excellent, because it is curiously carved and inlaid, but because it is exactly fitted to all the Purposes of Navigation; as we do not account a Sword to be excellent, because it hath a rich Hilt, or embroidered Scabbard, but because it hath a keen Edge, a sharp Point, or a good Guard and Temper: So none but Fools will esteem a Man to be excellent, because he hath a great Estate, or a comely Body, or wears fine Cloaths and rich Trappings; but

because he hath a brave and a goodly *Mind*, a *Soul* well adorned with *intellectual* or *moral* Accomplishments. These are the Glories of the *Man*, whereas all the rest are only the Imbellishments of his *Case* and *Outside*. So that the true Stamp of Nobility is upon the *Minds* of Men; and consists in those *Graces* of Understanding and Will, whereby we represent and resemble *God*, who is the Pattern of Excellency, and the Fountain of *Honour*. So that true *Honour* is nothing else but a due Acknowledgment of Mens Minds and Wills, or their own *intellectual* or *moral* Accomplishments echo'd and reverberated upon them in just Acknowledgments and Commendations; which to with-hold from one that truly *deserves* them is great *Injustice* and *Dishonesty*. For he who detains from a worthy Person those honourable Acknowledgments that are *due* to his Virtues, robs *Virtue* itself of one of the fairest Jewels in her Diadem, and that is her *Honour* and *Glory*: He strips and despoils her of her Garments of Praise, steals from her her native Rays and Lustre, and buries her alive in Darkness and Obscurity; and therefore since to rob a *virtuous Person* of his Honour and Reputation is so great an Outrage to *Virtue* itself, it must needs be highly *unjust* and *dishonest*. And herein consists the great Iniquity of *Detraction*, and of lessening or debasing Mens deserved Praises and Commendations; which is a higher *Injustice* than to pick their Purses: For he that clips or embases a Man's *Honour*, robs him of his best and dearest Property; and whilst he sucks the Veins of another's Reputation to put Colour into the Cheeks of his own, he lives upon the *Spoils* of his Neighbour; and is every whit as injurious to him, as if he should pull down his House about his Ears to build himself another in its Ruins. And yet how common is this *unrighteous* Practice among Men? How doth this groveling *Serpent* lurk almost in every Hedge, to snap at the Heel of every nobler Creature that passes by? Insomuch that a Man can hardly mention in any Company another Man's Excellencies, but presently some little *Viper* or other will be perking up to sting and spit Poison at him; and if he can say nothing against him, yet something he will seem to know, and with a crafty Nod and Shrug, a malicious Smile or Snear, suppress and conceal it; and if he chance to speak of another, what Care doth he take to stifle what may commend, and blazon what may shame and disgrace him? like the envious *Panther*, that shadows in dusky Colours all the graceful Parts and Features, but carefully exposes the Spots and Blemishes to open View. These, and a thousand other Tricks of *Detraction* are frequently practised in all Conversations; but certainly did Men but consider what a *villainous Injustice* this is, and how much it provokes God, who will one Day make a strict Inquisition for Mens good *Names*, as well as for their *Blood*, they would never dare to allow themselves in such a crying Injustice towards one another.

IV. There are other *Rights* acquir'd by outward *Rank* and *Quality*, whether it be in respect of titular *Dignity*, or of *Wealth* and large *Possessions*; by both which Men do require a Right to civil *Respect* and outward *Obedience*. For as for the several Degrees of *Nobility*, *Titles* and Places of *Dignity*, by which Men are advanced above the vulgar Class into the upper Form of Mankind, there are so many Marks and Badges of Honour; by which the *King*, who is the Fountain of Honour, and who by smiling on a Clod of Earth can, with the *April* Sun, prefer it into a gay Flower, doth raise and ennoble Men, advance them into a higher Orb, a more illustrious Rank and Station in the World. Now though by virtue of this titular *Dignity*, we are no farther obliged to reverence or esteem Men, than their *Wisdom* or *Virtue* deserves; yet are we bound to give them their *due Titles*, and demean ourselves towards them with that outward *Preference*, *Observance* and *Ceremony*, which their Degree and Quality requires; otherwise we rob them of those Rights, which the *King*, who is Master of outward *Respects* and *Precedencies*, hath bestowed upon them. For the *Royal Stamp* upon any kind of Metal gives it an *extrinsick* Value, and determines the Rate at which it is to pass among Coins; though

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it cannot raise its *intrinsick* Worth, nor make that which is but *Brass* to be *Gold.* And as titular *Dignities* intitle Men to an outward *Respect* and *Observance,* so also doth *Wealth* and large *Possessions:* For these are Badges of Honour as well as the other, only the other we receive from the *King*, but these from the *King of Kings* . For when God bestows upon one Man a larger Fortune and Possessions than on another, he doth thereby prefer and advance him into a higher *Sphere* and *Condition*; and when God hath set him above us, it is just and fit that we should rise and give place to him. And though a wise, or *virtuous* poor Man hath more Right to our Esteem, than a *fortunate* Knave or Fool, who in all his Glory is but a Beast of Burthen in rich Trapping and *Caparisons*; yet forasmuch as in outward Rank and Condition God hath preferred the latter, he hath the *Right* of Precedency, and of outward Respect and Observances, and ought to be treated with greater Obeisance and Regard.

CHAP. VII.

Of Justice, *in Reference to the Rights acquir'd by* Compact.

V. FIfthly and *lastly*, There are other *Rights* acquir'd by *Bargaining* and *Compact:* For Compacts being a mutual transferring of Rights, wherein the Person with whom I bargain makes over such a Commodity to me for so much Money or other valuable Thing, the Right whereof I make over to him; we mutually owe this Right to one another, to deal truly and honestly in *making*, and sincerely and faithfully in *discharging* our Compacts and mutual Engagements with each other. For since the End of Commerce and buying and selling is mutually to assist and furnish one another with the Necessaries and Conveniencies of Life; both Buyer and Seller must thence have a Right accruing to them so to buy and sell, as that they may be mutually assisted by one another; as that the Buyer may have the Worth of his Price, and the Seller the Worth of his Commodity: For otherwise instead of mutually assisting, the one must necessarily depress and damnify the other. What the exact *Measure* is, which in matter of buying and selling ought to be observed between Man and Man, is, I confess a difficult Question, and hardly capable of being *nicely determined*; especially by us who are so little acquainted with the Affairs of the World, the Necessities of Things, and the particular and hidden Reasons of some Sorts of Traffick and Dealing: And therefore that I may not venture beyond my Depth in the Determination of this Matter, I shall only prescribe such general *Rules* of Righteousness to conduct our *Bargains* and *Contracts*, as being impartially applied to particular Cases, may secure Men from dealing wrongfully and injuriously with one another. And they are these; *First*, Use *Plainness* and *Simplicity* in all your Dealings. *Secondly*, Impose upon no Man's *Ignorance* and *Unskilfulness.* *Thirdly*, Take no Advantage of another's Necessities. *Fourthly*, Substract not from the *Commodity* or *Price*, for which you have contracted. *Fifthly*, Go not to the *utmost* Verge of what thou conceivest to be *lawful.* *Sixthly*, In doubtful Cases chuse the *safest* Part.

I. Use *Plainness* and *Simplicity* in all your Dealings: Do not by disparaging *another* Man's Commodity, or over-valuing *your own*, endeavour to draw on an advantageous Bargain; neither ask far *beyond*, nor bid much *below* the Worth of Commodities. Say not you cannot take less, or give more, when you know you may with fair Advantage and Profit. Pretend not what is *false*, cover not what is *true*; but so far as in you lies, fit your Affirmations

and Denials to the *Understanding* of the Person you deal with: And do not lie in Ambush behind your Words to trap and ensnare him. For in Bargains not only that which is *false* is unjust, but also that which *deceives*.

II. Impose upon no Man's *Ignorance* and *Unskilfulness*. Whilst you keep within the Latitude of lawful Gain, you may use your Skill against another Man in driving a Bargain; for in an ordinary *Plenty* of Commodities there is an ordinary *Price*, which those that deal in them know and understand, and when the Contractors equally *understand* the Price, there can be no Deception or Injustice on either Side. But if he whom I contract with be *ignorant* or *unskilful*, I must not rate his want of Understanding, or set a Tax upon his Ignorance, but use him not only *justly* but *ingenuously*, as one that reposes a Trust in me and casts himself upon my *Equity*; considering that to take Advantage from his *Simplicity* to abuse and defraud him, would be not only *Injustice* but *Inhumanity*.

III. Take no Advantage of another's *Necessities*. Do not wring and squeeze a poor Man when he is driven to your Doors by his *Wants*, and forced to sell his Wares to supply his *Necessities*; but give him the same Price you would have done, supposing he wanted your *Money* no more than you needed his *Commodity*. And if the poor Man be forced to buy of you upon *Trust*, increase your *Price* no higher than what is necessary to make you Recompence for the *Loss*, which according to the Rules of Trade you must sustain by your *Forbearance*; reckoning also the Hazards you run which ought to be charitably and prudently estimated. For he who makes Advantage of another's Necessities, robs the Spittle, and adds Oppression to Misery; which is not only *Injustice* but *Barbarity*.

IV. Substract not from the Commodity or Price, for which you have contracted. For he who *buys* a Commodity by Weight or Measure, hath a *Right* to as much of it as the common Standard allows him; to have a full Standard Pound, or Pint, or Bushel according as he bargains or contracts, and to substract any thing from what he hath bargained from, whether it be by *false* Weights or Measures, or by *falsely* weighing or measuring, is no better than *Theft* and *Robbery*. And so on the other Hand, he who sells a Commodity hath a Right to the Money for which he sold it; and therefore for the Buyer either *knowingly* to pay him uncurrent Coin, or *forcibly* to detain from him any Part of the Price agreed on, is a manifest *Violation* of the eternal Rules of of Righteousness.

V. Go not to the *utmost* Verge of what you conceive to be *lawful*, for he who goes to the utmost of what is lawful, ventures to the Brink of a *Precipice*, where he stands in imminent Danger of falling into it. For it is a short and easy Passage from the *utmost* Limit of what is *lawful*, to the nearmost of what is *sinful*: So that he, that will go as far as he *may*, will never be able to avoid going sometimes farther than he *should*; especially when he is led on by *Interest*, and hath a tempting Prospect of *Advantage* before him, which is wont to blind the Eyes of Men, to warp their Judgment, to tincture their Minds with *false Colours* and *undue Apprehensions* of *Things*. Wherefore in that Latitude of *lawful Gain* which is allow'd you, use Favour towards the *poor* and *necessitous*, Ingenuity towards the *ignorant* and *unskilful*, and Moderation towards *all*.

VI. *Sixthly* and *lastly*, In doubtful Cases chuse the *safest* Part: For not only a *good*, but a *quiet* Conscience is to be valued above the greatest Gain; and that Man hath but little Regard of his Conscience, that will venture to expose it to a Wound to get a Shilling more in a Bargain. Wherefore if we would be *safe*, we must make this a constant Rule of Action, in Matters of *Duty* to do the *most*, in Matters of *Privilege* and Divisions of Right, or Proportions of Gain, in all doubtful Cases, to chuse the *least*, which to be sure is always the *safest*. For if in buying and selling I make any Advantage which

which I doubt is unlawful, I stake my Conscience at a Lottery, and throw Cross and Pile whether I shall be guilty or innocent; and thus to *play* and *dally* with my Innocence is but one Degree of Presumption from being *wilfully guilty*.

These are the *general Rules* by which we ought to conduct ourselves in our *Compacts* and *Bargains*, if we mean to avoid that crying Sin of *defrauding* and *over-reaching* one another; which how crafty and politick soever it may seem to Men that do not regard the Issue and Event of Things, it will in the End be found to be one of the greatest and most unprofitable *Follies*. For alas, while I am over-reaching my Brother in his *Estate*, there is an *invisible Cheat* at my Elbow that is chousing me out of my *Heaven* and my *Soul!* So that in fine, the whole Scene of Knavery resolves into this; the *Devil* is angling with a less Fish to catch a greater, baiting his Hook with my *Brother's Property*, that so when I have taken and devoured *that*, he may take and devour *me*. And so I have done with the first thing proposed in handling this great and comprehensive Duty of *Justice*, or *Honesty* between Man and Man, which was to shew what it is, and how far it is extended.

Chap. VIII.

Of the eternal Reasons of Justice.

I PROCEED in the next Place to shew what those *eternal* and *immutable* Reasons are, which render Justice *morally* good. I have elsewhere shewed at large, that that which makes a thing morally good is this, That its Obligation is founded in some *eternal* and *immutable* Reasons: So that we are obliged to practice it by such Reasons as can never cease or change, or alter with *Times* or *Circumstances:* And that this is the Difference between *positive* and *moral* Duties, that the one are founded upon *temporary* and *changeable* Reasons, and so may and will one time or other cease to oblige us; as the *Sacrifices* of the Jews have done, and the *Sacraments* of Christians will do; whereas the other being backed with *everlasting* Reasons can never cease to oblige us. Wherefore to demonstrate *Justice* to be a *moral* Duty, or one of those moral Goods which God hath made known to us; it will be necessary to produce some *eternal* and *unchangeable* Reasons whereby it binds and obliges us; and of such I shall produce these Four:

First, The eternal *Proportion* and *Congruity* of Justice to the Nature of *Things*.

Secondly, The eternal *Conformity* of it to the Nature of *God*.

Thirdly, The eternal *Correspondency* of it with the *Divine* Providence and Dispofals.

Fourthly, The eternal *Necessity* of it to the Happiness of *Men*.

I. One *eternal* Reason, by which we stand obliged to do justly, is the eternal *Proportion* and *Congruity* of Justice to the Nature of Things. For there are in Nature eternal *Respects* of Things to Things, which are as fixed and unalterable as the Nature of the Things themselves: As for instance, some Things are naturally more *perfect* than others, such as the superiour Kinds and Orders of Beings; others are naturally *equal* in Perfection, such as the Individuals of the same kind of Beings; others are naturally *less perfect*, such as the inferiour Ranks and Species of Beings; and since *Nature* hath thus ranked and placed Things either *above*, or *below*, or *equal* to one another, every Being in

in the World must naturally respect every one, either as it is *superior* or *inferior* or *equal*; and these *Respects* are as inseparable to their Nature, as those *Degrees* of Perfection are which constitute their Kinds and Orders. So that were all the Beings in the World *rational*, and understood but their mutual *Respects* and *Relations* to one another, they would thereby be *obliged* to demean themselves towards each other suitably to that Rank and Form of Being wherein Nature hath placed them; and by their Actions to acknowledge themselves *superior* or *inferior* or *equal* to one another, according as they excel, or equal, or come short of one another in *Degrees* of natural Perfection. And herein consists the strict and proper Notion of doing *justly*, *viz.* in treating my Superiors, Inferiors, and Equals as such, in respecting my Equals equally, and my Superiors and Inferiors according to the Degree of Superiority and Inferiority wherein they are placed. So that *Justice* consists in acting congruously to those *eternal Respects*, which things bear to one another; or in a practical Acknowledgment that the Beings above me, below me, and equal to me, do bear such a Respect to me as they really do; that they are just so much my Superiors, so much my Inferiors, or so much my Equals, as God and Nature hath made them. For among Beings that are capable of understanding those Respects and Relations they bear to one another, it is a *natural Due* that they should own one another to be what they are, and mutually signify by their Actions and Behaviour what Respects and Relations they bear to one another; that by *Reverence* and *Submission* they should own those above them to be their Superiors; that by *Grace* and *Condescension* they should own those beneath them to be Inferiors; and that by *Equity* or *Equality* of Usage and Behaviour, they should own those who are level with them to be their Peers and Equals. These are the natural Expressions of our Acknowledgment of those *mutual* Respects and Relations we bear to one another, which not to acknowledge, is in effect to deny one another to be what we are, to thrust one another out of our *Places*, and invade each other's *Rights* and *Peculiars*. So that in short *Justice* is nothing else but the great *Balance* of the rational World, which weighs out to every Part of it what is *due* from every one in those respective *Ranks* and *Relations* wherein God and Nature hath placed them; and so long as there remains any *Proportion* of Nearness or Distance, of Superiority, or Inferiority, or Equality, among rational Beings, that will be a firm and unanswerable Reason why they should deal *justly* and *righteously* towards one another; because *dealing justly* is nothing else but a practical Owning and Acknowledgment of these Respects and Relations; which so long as they continue, every Being must be obliged to acknowledge, that hath any Capacity to know and understand them. For since God hath given me Reason to understand that all those Beings which are of my own Kind and Order, are my *Equals* by Nature, I cannot but conclude that they ought to be *equally dealt* with; since equal Things must necessarily belong to equal Beings in the same Circumstances. And from this Principle whereon that golden Rule is founded, *to do as we would be done by*, all the particular Instances of Justice between Man and Man are naturally derived. So that the Obligations of Justice, you see, do immediately grow out of the *Nature* of Things, and those *Respects* and *Relations* they bear to one another: And therefore till the *Nature* of Things be utterly unravelled, and their *Respects* to one another for ever cancelled and reversed, every rational Being must be obliged to be *just*; that is, to acknowledge, so far as he understands it, the *Respect* and *Relation* he bears to all *other* Beings; by demeaning himself submissively towards his Superiors, equally towards his Equals, and condescendingly towards his Inferiors. And whatsoever we are obliged to by the *Nature* of Things, we are obliged to by the *Author* of Nature; whose *Works* are as real Signs and Expressions of his Will, as his revealed *Declarations*: And therefore since *he* framed and constituted us with such *Respects* and *Relations* to one another, that is as plain a Signification that it is *his Will* we should demean our selves accordingly, as if he had proclaimed it by a Voice of Thunder from the Battlements of Heaven. Since therefore God hath thus

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ingraven the Obligations of Justice upon the *Nature* of Things, they must abide for ever, and be as eternal as those *Respects* and *Relations* are which Things bear to one another.

II. Another eternal Reason by which we are obliged to do *justly*, is the Conformity of it to the Nature of *God.* For Justice is one of the brightest Jewels of God's Diadem, one of those most glorious *Attributes* which do eternally crown and adorn his Nature, and determine his Will, and direct his Actions. *Just and true are thy Ways, thou King of Saints,* Rev. xv. 3. *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy Judgments,* Psal. cxix. 137. *Are not my Ways equal, and are not your Ways unequal?* saith God himself appealing to the Consciences of his Subjects, in *Ezek.* xviii. Consonantly to all which is the Assertion of *Plato,* Θεὸς οὐδαμῇ οὐδαμῶς ἄδικος, ἀλλ' ὡς οἷόν τε δικαιότατος. God cannot be said to be unjust in any Respect whatsoever, but is in all Kinds just to the utmost Possibility. And of Temptation to deal injuriously by his *Creatures:* He wants none of their Rights to enrich himself, needs none of *their* Happiness to augment *his own*; which is so boundless and secure, that it can neither admit of any Increase, or be liable to any Diminution. What then should move him either to *deprive* his Creatures of any Good that is their due, or to *inflict* on them any Evil that they have not deserved; when he can serve no End of his own, nor reap any Advantage to himself by it? For all Injustice springs out of *Want* and *Indigence*, which being utterly excluded from the Nature of *God*, it is impossible there should be any unjust Inclination, or Tendency in him. And as by the infinite *Self-sufficiency* of his Nature he is secured from all Temptation to Injustice, so, by the infinite *Goodness* of it, he stands unvariably bent and inclined to deal justly and righteously by his Creatures. For *Goodness* is nothing but an Inclination of Nature to bestow more Good than is *due*, and inflict less Evil than is *deserved*; which Inclination being inseparable to the Nature of God, it is impossible for him either to *with-hold* from us any Right, or to punish us *wrongfully*, without doing Violence to *himself*, and committing an Outrage on his own Nature. So that the *Nature* of *God* is a Law of Righteousness to himself, by which his Will and Actions are constantly determined to what is *just* and *equal*; to require nothing of us but what is *possible*, to proportion our Burthens to our Strength, and our Strength to our Burthens, to satisfy all his Engagements to us, and not with-hold from us any of those Goods which we can claim by the Title of his gracious *Promises*; in a word, to proportion the Evils of our *Sufferings* to the Evils of our *Sin*, and not to plague us for nothing, or for what we cannot help, or beyond the *Guilt* and *Demerit* of our Fault; and whatsoever else is just from a *God* to a *Creature*, he is unchangeably determined to chuse and act by the Law of Righteousness in his own *Nature.* Since therefore the *Nature* of *God* is the great Exemplar and Pattern of all *reasonable Natures*, as being itself the most *perfectly reasonable*; whatsoever is imitable in it we are eternally obliged to copy and transcribe into our own, and consequently since he is *eternally just*, that is an eternal Reason why we should be so. By dealing *justly* with one another we act like God, whose Nature is the Standard of ours; and 'tis certainly fit that all *reasonable Beings* should deal by one another, as *God* who is the most reasonable deals by them; that they should chuse and act in Conformity to him who is the *Pattern* of Goodness, and the *Rule* of Perfection. And herein consists our Conformity to him, that we live by the Law of his Nature; and therefore so long as that Law determines him to deal justly by *us*, it ought to determine us to deal justly by *one another.* So that the Obligations of *Justice* are as eternal as the Nature of *God*; for so long as *he* is righteous, we are bound to be righteous in Conformity to *him*; and therefore since *he* cannot cease to be righteous without ceasing to be happy and good, or which is all one, to be *God, We* can never cease being obliged to be righteous so long as *God* is.

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III. Another eternal Reaſon by which we are obliged to do *juſtly*, is the Agreement and Correſpondency of it with the *divine Providence* and *Diſpoſals*. For God being the ſupreme Lord and Proprietor of Beings, all thoſe Rights and Properties which we claim of one another muſt be *originally* derived from him; even as the Claims of the *Under-Tenants* are from the *Head-Landlord*. All thoſe *natural* Rights we are inveſted with, we derive from him who is the Author of our Nature; who by creating us what we are, and uniting us by natural Ligaments to one another, hath endowed us with all thoſe Rights which we claim as rational Creatures dwelling in mortal Bodies, and joined together by *natural Relations* and *Society*. So that to deal *juſtly* by one another, or with reſpect to our natural Rights, is only to allow one another what God hath entailed upon our Natures, and *mutually* to render thoſe Dues to each other, which he hath entitled us to by the very *Frame* and *Condition* of our Beings; and for us to with-hold from one another thoſe Rights which God hath conſigned to us by the *State* and *Formation* of our *Nature*, is to quarrel with his Workmanſhip, and declare our ſelves diſſatisfied with the State of his Creation. For whatſoever I have a Right to as I am a *Man*, I have a Right to by the State and Condition of *my Nature*; and therefore he who allows me not *that*, allows me not to be what *God* hath made me; permits me not to enjoy that State and Condition of Nature wherein God hath created and placed me. For whatſoever I have a Right to as I am a *Man*, I have a Right to from *God* who made me a Man; and therefore he who denies me the Right of my *Nature*, thruſts me down from the Form wherein God hath placed me, and uſes me as if I *were not* what God hath made me; whereby he doth in effect fly in the Face of my Creator, and quarrel with God for making me what I am. In a Word, it is *eternally Reaſonable* that I who am the Creature of God, ſhould pay ſo much Reverence to his all-creating Wiſdom and Power, as to treat every Creature ſuitably to the *State* and *Condition* of its Creation; and conſequently to treat *Men* as *Men*, that is, as Beings endowed by God with the common Rights of human Nature; which if I do not, I alienate from my own Kind what *God* hath endowed it with, and ſo in effect do diſallow of his Endowments, and impiouſly call in Queſtion the Rights of *his* Creation. For either I muſt own, that God ought not to have conſtituted human Nature with ſuch *Rights*, which would be to impeach his Creation; or that I ought to render it thoſe *Rights* which reſult from its Frame and Conſtitution; and therefore when by my Actions I diſown that I *ought* to render them, I do in effect quarrel with God's Creation for entailing ſuch Rights upon human Nature, and declare that I am reſolved not to be concluded by it; but that I will for ever defy the *Laws* of the Creation, and will not abide by that *Rule* and *Order* which it hath eſtabliſhed in the Nature of Things. If therefore it be reaſonable, eternally reaſonable for Creatures to act agreeably to the *Order* of their Creation; this is an eternal Reaſon why we ſhould render to one another thoſe Rights which God hath bequeathed to us by the Conſtitution of our *Natures*.

And as our natural Rights are derived to us from God by his *Creation*, ſo are our acquired alſo derived from him by his *Providence*, who having reſerved to himſelf the ſovereign Diſpoſal of all our Affairs, is our *Founder* and *Benefactor*, upon whom we all depend for every *Right* and *Property* we acquire by our Converſation and Intercourſe with one another: and that this is *mine*, and that *yours*, is owing to the *Providence* of God, which carves out to every one his Portion of Right, and divides as *he* ſees fit his World among his Creatures. So that Juſtice as it refers to *acquired Rights*, conſiſts in allowing every Man to enjoy what God hath given him by his all-diſpoſing Providence: And if God hath an eternal Right to *ſhare* his own Goods among his own Creatures as he pleaſes, then that is an eternal Reaſon why we ſhould allow one another to enjoy thoſe *Portions* which he hath ſhared and divided to us. For by depriving another Man of what God's Providence hath

given him, I do not only rob *him* of his Right to enjoy it, but I also rob *God* of his Right to dispose it. For while I with-hold or take away what God hath given to another, I take *his* Goods against his Leave, and impiously invade *his Province* of bestowing his own where he pleases: And whilst I thus carve for my *self* out of those Allowances which he hath carved to *others*, I live in open *Rebellion* against his Providence, and am an Out-law to his Government. For this in effect is the Sense and Meaning of my *wrongful Incroachments* upon other Mens Rights, that I will not be concluded by that Division and Allotment of Things which *God* hath made; but that I will divide and carve for *my self*, and live at my own Allowance; that I will not suffer him to share his *own World*, nor endure him to reign Lord and Master in his *own Family* of Beings, but e'en live as I list, and take what I can catch without asking God's Leave, who is the supreme Proprietor and Disposer. So that to deal unjustly by *Men*, whether it be in respect of their *natural*, or *acquired* Rights, is a direct Opposition to the *divine* Ordination and Disposal; and therefore if it be eternally reasonable for us who are God's *Creatures* and *Subjects*, to comply with the Order of his *Creation* and the Disposals of his *Providence*, that is an eternal Reason why we should deal *justly* with one another.

IV. *Fourthly* and *lastly*, Another eternal Reason why we are obliged to do *justly*, is the everlasting *Necessity* of it to the Happiness of Men: For *Justice* is the Pillar and Support of all *Society*, without which it is impossible for *rational Beings* ever to live happily with one another. For while I deal unjustly by *others*, I draw all Men into a Combination against me; who having all the same tender Sense of their own Interest and Happiness as I have of mine, must be sufficiently jealous of all Designs and Incroachments on their *Rights* and *Properties*; and consequently be ready to conclude from my Injustice towards *one*, that I am prepared to do mischief to *many* for the Advancement of my own Ends: So that when once I am remarked for a Person that bears no Regard to *Right* and *Wrong*, it becomes the joint and equal Interest of *all* to declare open War against *me*, and treat me as an open Enemy without Mercy and Compassion. So that one *unjust* Man in a Society is a *common Disturbance* to all the rest, for by every *single* Injury he doth, he alarms the Jealousy of *every* Man, every Man having Reason to conclude that he shall be served by him in the *same* kind, if he should happen to fall into the *same Circumstances*: And as he disturbs *others*, so he cannot securely enjoy *himself*; for how can that Man be secure that acts as an Enemy to Mankind, and for that Reason hath just Cause to suspect that every Man is his Enemy who is conscious to his injurious Behaviour? The *Fear* of which must necessarily deprive him of all *Satisfaction* for the present, and of all *Security* for the future. So that unjust Persons are a *Plague* to themselves, and others; and like frighted *Porcupines* they are disturbed *within*, whilst they dart their Quills at all without them. What a dark rude *Chaos* then would this reasonable World be, should *Justice* and *Righteousness* forsake it; should Rapine and Violence, Falsehood and Oppression reign, and the strongest Arm be sole Arbitrator of Right and Wrong; should all *Promises* and *Professions* be converted into *Traps* and *Snares*; and every Man lay Ambushes in his Words, and lurk behind them in *reserved* Meanings, only to wait an opportunity to surprize and ruin every one he converses with? What would the Consequence of this be, but the disbanding of all *Society*, and the converting of this human World into a Den of *Wolves* and *Cannibals*: For by reason of Mens continued Experience of each others *Falshood* and *Insincerity*, all *mutual* Trust and Confidence would be banished from among them; and every one would be forced to stand upon his guard in a constant Expectation of Mischief from every one; and so all their Intercourse would consist in a Trade of *diabolical Knaveries*, in doing and retaliating Injuries, and in circumventing and playing the Devils with one another. Which would be such a dreadful

full State of Things, that I verily believe, were it left to my Opinion, I should rather chuse to languish out an Eternity in some *dismal Dungeon* alone, and there converse only with my own silent Griefs, than to dwell for ever in the *Garden* of the World, accompanied with such *false* and *villainous* Creatures. But now, do but turn the other End of the Perspective, and imagine that you saw *Judgment running down like Water, and Righteousness as a mighty Stream,* that you beheld a World of *upright People*, balancing all their Actions and Intercourses in the impartial Scale of *Justice*, and mutually weighing to one another their *natural* and *acquired Rights* without any Respect or Partiality, the *Superiours* graciously condescending, the *Inferiours* chearfully submitting, and the *Equals* dealing equally with one another! O good God! What a blessed and happy People would this be? With what *Content* and *Satisfaction*, *Peace* and mutual *Security* would they deal and converse with one another? Here would be no Quarrels or Contentions, no Jealousies or Suspicions, no dark Designs or false Pretences; but every one would converse with every one with the greatest Openness and Freedom, and all would be inviolably safe in each other's *Sincerity* and *Justice:* Here would be no justling or rencountring, no clashing or interfering of Interests; but every one would sit happy and contented under his own Vine without any unjust *Desire* of trespassing on his *Neighbour's* Inclosure, or disquieting *Fear* of being ejected from his own. O! were I but an Inhabitant of such a World as *this*, though of the lowest Rank and Form; how should I despise and pity the most prosperous Circumstances of this unrighteous World we live in? And how loth should I be to change my World for any other, but that of *Angels* and of glorified *Spirits? O Justice, Justice*, would Men but call thee down from Heaven again, and permit thee to rule and *govern* their Actions, into what a blessed World wouldst thou convert this Stage of Rapine, Cruelty and Blood! How wouldst thou separate this dark Chaos, and distinguish its Confusions into Order and Beauty! How soon wouldst thou reform it into an Emblem of Heaven, or lively Figure of that celestial Æther, where all is *Harmony*, and *Light*, and *Peace*, and *Love*, and *Happiness!* If therefore it be eternally reasonable that Men should study their own Happiness, that is an everlasting Reason why they should deal *justly* by one another; since without so doing it is for ever *impossible* for them to be *happy.* These are the eternal and immutable Reasons, which constitute Justice a *moral Good*, and do eternally oblige us to deal *justly* by one another.

And now what remains, but that we betake ourselves to the Conscientious Practice of this *great* and *comprehensive* Virtue, to give to every Man what is *due* to him either by *Constitution*, or by just *Acquisition*; to deal with every Man with whom we have any Intercourse, as with a *Rational* Creature; to treat him *equitably*, and do him all that Good which we might reasonably expect from him, if *we* were placed in *his* Circumstances; to allow him the Liberty to *judge* for *himself*, so far as he is capable, and not endeavour to impose our Opinions upon him by *violent* and *forcible* Means; to leave him at Liberty to follow the Dictates of *right Reason*, and not seek to debauch him by Persuasion or Threatnings, into *immoral* and *vicious* Courses; to treat him humanely and suitably to the *Dignity* of his *Nature*, and not use him like a Dog, or as if he were an Animal of an inferiour *Species?* For all those things are due to him as he is a *rational* Creature, and cannot be denied to him without high *Injustice*. Again, to deal with him as he is a *rational* Creature placed by God in a *mortal Body*; and neither to *ravish* his Body to satisfy our Lust, nor to *maim* or *destroy* it, unless it be in our own Defence; nor to *captivate* and *enslave* it, unless it be upon free Consent, or upon just Forfeiture; nor to suffer it to *perish* for want of bodily Sustenance, so long as it is in our power to support and relieve it. These things he hath a Claim to, as he is the *Tenant* of *God*, and cannot be denied without foul *Injustice*. Once more; to use him as a *rational* Creature united to me by *natural Relations*; if he be my *Father*, to honour and reverence and obey him; if he be my *Child*, to love and

instruct him, maintain and provide for him; if my *Brother* or *Sister* or consanguineous *Relation*, to cherish and advise, support and assist him according to my Ability. These are the *Dues* of *Natural Relation*, and cannot be with-held without great *Unrighteousness*. *Lastly*, To treat him as one whom God and Nature hath united to me in the Bands of *human Society*, to *love* him, and live *peaceably* with him, to speak *Truth* to him, and when I am lawfully called to swear nothing but *Truth* concerning him, and perform my Promises and Oaths to him, so far as it is lawful and possible; not to blast his *Reputation*, but to defend his Person, good Name and Estate, so far as I am able, and to allow him a competent Share of all those Profits which accrue to me from my *dealing* and *intercourse* with him. These are the *natural Dues* which Justice requires me to render him, and which I cannot with-hold from him without being injurious to the human Nature within him. And as I am obliged in Justice to render to every one his *natural* Dues, so I am no less obliged by it to render him his *acquired* ones; to render him whatsoever is due to him upon the Account of any sacred, or civil *Relation* to me; not to intrench upon his legal *Possessions* either by Fraud or Violence; to render him those *Honours* and *Respects* which are owing to his personal Accomplishments; or to his outward Rank and Quality; and not to defraud, oppress, or over-reach him in his *Contracts* and *Bargains* with me. These are the Particulars as I have shewed at large, to which this *comprehensive Virtue* extends itself; and Oh that now having seen upon what *everlasting Reasons* it is built, we would be persuaded to betake ourselves to the serious *Practice* of it!

Chap. IX.

Of the Sinfulness, and Unreasonableness of Injustice.

AFTER the Explication of the immutable Reasons and Grounds of *Justice*, it may be proper to add some Motives, and Considerations against *Injustice*.

And *First*, Consider the great Repugnancy of *Injustice* to the Terms, and Conditions of the *Christian Religion*. I know there are some People that look upon *Honesty* and *Justice*, as one of the *beggarly Elements* of Religion, a sort of Heathen Virtue belonging to *carnal* and mere *moral* Men, that are utterly unacquainted with the *Spirit* and *Power* of Godliness: And accordingly in the Room of this, and such like moral Virtues, they have foisted in a sort of *Spiritual* Religion as they call it; which consists in a certain *Model* of Conversion and Regeneration, that is made up of nothing but a mere *fanciful* Train of *Dejections* and *Triumphs*, that are most commonly either the Effects of a distempered *Blood*, or the unaccountable Freaks of an over-heated *Fancy:* and if they find they have been converted *secundum artem, i. e.* that they have undergone those frightful, sorrowful, or joyous Passions, which this stated *Method* of Regeneration includes, all their after-Religion is nothing else but a *leaning* and *rolling* on Jesus Christ. And whilst they should be governing their Wills, their Tongues, and their Actions by the eternal Rules of *Justice* and *Goodness*, they are imploy'd, as they think in a *higher* Dispensation; in forming odd Schemes of spiritual Experiences, and attending to the inward Whispers and Incomes, and With-drawings of the Spirit of God; all which are commonly nothing but only the Effects of a melancholly *Fancy* tinctured with religious Fears, and flush'd with a natural *Enthusiasm*. But whatever it be, it is doubtless a *dangerous Mistake* for Men to take up with any Religion, which doth not principally insist upon the *eternal Laws* of Morality; And though *Justice* or *Honesty* in our Dealings with Men will never *singly* recommend us to God,

God, unless it be conjoyn'd with *Mercy, Sobriety,* and *Godliness*; yea, though all these *together* will never recommend us to God, unless their Imperfections be purged and expiated by the all-sufficient Merit of our blessed Saviour; yet without *Justice*, and *Honesty*, all our Religion is a damnable *Cheat*; and all the Merit of our Saviour will be as insignificant to *us*, as it is to the *Devils*, or *damned* Ghosts. For his Merit is no Refuge for religious Knaves, his Wounds no Sanctuary for spiritual Cheats, or Lyars, or Oppressors: And for such Persons as *these*, to shelter themselves in our Saviour's Propitiation, is to *prophane* and *desecrate* it; and thereby to cause those vocal Wounds to *accuse* them, which were made to *plead* for them; and to provoke that *eloquent* Blood to cry aloud for Vengeance against them, which in its native Language *speaketh far better things than the Blood of Abel*, Heb. xii. 24. For *Justice* is a Duty of that indispensable Necessity, that God *will not*, yea, to speak with Reverence, *cannot* dipense with it: And so far was our Saviour from ever designing to obraining a *Dispensation* from it, that the great End of his dying to obtain our Pardon for our past Unrighteousness, was to encourage and oblige us to live more justly and righteously for the future. For so the Apostle tells us, Tit. ii. 14. *That he gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all Inquity, purifie unto himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works:* And notwithstanding all that he hath done for us, he hath plainly assured us by his Apostles, that no *unrighteous* Person shall *inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. vi. 9. and that the *unjust* shall be *reserved unto the Day of Judgment to be punished*, 2 Pet. ii. 9. *That the Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all Unrighteousness of Men*, Rom. i. 18. and *that they shall all be damned that take Pleasure in Uunrighteousness*, 2 Thess. ii. 12. And if these Things be so, then as ever you hope to enter into the Kingdom of God, to escape his unquenchable Wrath, to hold up your Heads at his Tribunal, and not to be condemn'd to everlasting Horror and Confusion; be persuaded to *fly from all Unrighteousness*, and use all honest Care to deal justly and righteously with all Men.

II. Consider the great Vanity, or Desperateness of *Injustice:* For if the Wrong and Injustice you do to another Man be such as is *repairable*, you must resolve to *repair* it, or to *perish* for ever. For he who doth *not* repair an Injury when he is able, doth every Moment *continue* and *repeat* it; and though the first injurious Act were *transient*, and did expire and die in the Commission, yet because it leaves a *permanent Evil* behind it upon the good Name, or Estate of my Neighbour, I am as much obliged, if I am able, to *remove* the Evil from him, as I was at first *not* to *bring* it upon him, and all the while I *neglect* to remove it, I wilfully *continue* the Evil upon him, and in so doing *continue* wilfully *injurious* to him. As for instance, when I wilfully asperse another Man's *Reputation*, my *Sin* dies not with my slanderous Breath, but *survives* in the evil Effects of it; and till I have endeavoured to *purge* his stained Reputation, and to *restore* him his good Name again by a fair and ingenuous *Vindication*, I am a Slanderer *still*, and accountable for all those hard Thoughts, and injurious Words which I have *occasion'd* others to think or speak against him. Again, when I *rob*, or *defraud* another Man of his Estate, or any part of it, the Sin doth not cease with the *transient Act* of Stealth, or Cozenage, or Violence, which ends and expires in the Commission; but *continues* so long as the *Damage* and *evil Effect* of it remains: Whilst therefore he suffers in his Estate by my injurious Act, and 'tis in my Power to *repair* it, I continue injuring him; and till I have made him all the *Restitution* I am able, I am a Cheat, or a Thief, or a Robber. Since therefore Injustice is a damnable Sin, as I shewed you before, it necessarily follows, that whenever a Man deals unjustly by another, he must at the same time either resolve to *undo* his own Act, or to run the Hazard of being *undone* for ever; the former of which is a ridiculous *Vanity*, and the latter a desperate *Madness*. For what a *Vanity* is it, for a Man to *do*

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what he resolves to *undo*, to *slander* with a Purpose to *vindicate*, and *cheat* with a Resolution to *refund*, that is, to do an evil Thing with a Purpose to be never the better for it? If you resolve to *restore* what you wrongfully take from another, why do you *take* it? Is it so cheap a Matter to be wicked, that you should covet to be wicked for *nothing?* That you should contract a *Guilt* which will bind you over to eternal *Punishment*, with an Intention to *part* with all that temporary Gain which *tempted* and *invited* you to it? What is this but to weave a *Penelope*'s Web, to do and undo, and build Castles of Cards, to blow them down again; and which is more vain and nonsensical, to *swallow* deadly *Poison* for our Health and Ease, which we know will rack and convulse us, with a Purpose to *vomit* it up again, without gaining either Health, or Ease by it? For he who wrongs another with a Purpose to make him *Restitution*, doth an evil Action with an Intent to get nothing but *Guilt* by it. You say, you intend to *restore* to him what you *wrong* him of, and if so, for what *End* do you wrong him? Unless it be to render yourself more criminal and guilty: For when you have restored to him what you have wrongfully deprived him of, what can remain to you but only the Guilt of a *wrongful* and *injurious* Action? So that for Men to deal unjustly by others with an *Intent* to make them Restitution, is the greatest Vanity and Nonsense in the World; but then to do it without such an Intent, is the most desperate Madness. For since every wilful Act of *Injustice* binds Men over to eternal Punishment, and since nothing but *Restitution*, so far as they are able, can release and absolve them from that dire Obligation, it necessarily follows, that he who deals unjustly by others without any Intent of making them *Restitution*, doth by his *own Act* wilfully oblige himself to endure an eternal Punishment. For he knows, that what he gains *unjustly* from another must be *restored*, or his *Soul* must be lost, and therefore if he resolve upon that Gain without an Intent to *restore* it, he doth in effect stake his *Soul* to it, and freely oblige himself to endure Hell-Fire for ever, in Consideration of the *present Gain* he acquires by his unjust dealing. For he who knows that such a *Potion*, however sweetned and made palatable is compounded with the Juice of deadly *Night-shade*, and yet wilfully swallow it without any Intent to disgorge it again, doth thereby *voluntarily* murder and destroy himself: And so who knows that such an *unjust Gain*, how tempting soever it may look for the present, hath an everlasting *Horrour* and *Anguish* intermingled with it, and yet wilfully *seizes* it without any Intent to *refund* it; doth freely consent to undergo the *Evil* to enjoy the *Good* of it, and shake Hands upon this desperate Bargain, that upon Condition he may reap such an *unlawful Profit*, he will freely surrender up his *immortal Soul* to the Pangs and Agonies of *Eternal Death.* For in every Temptation to deal unjustly, the *Devil* cheapens our immortal Soul, and the *unlawful Gain* with which he tempts us is the *Price* he bids for it: And though sometimes he bids exceeding *low*, yet if we take his Price, though it be but a *Penny*, we thereby strike the fatal *Bargain*, and by our own Act and Deed, consign and deliver our *Souls* to him to be his Slaves *here*, and his Martyrs *hereafter*. And what greater Madness can a Man be guilty of, than to sell his *Soul* and all his Hopes of *Happiness* for ever, for the trifling and momentary Gains of an unjust *Action?*

III. Consider the manifest *Inexcuseableness* of *Injustice* in itself: For, as I have shewed you at large, all Justice between Man and Man is reducible to that general Rule, *Do as you would be done by*; *i. e.* Do all that Good to others, which you could reasonably expect they should do to you, if you were in their Circumstances, and they in yours: And this is so plain a Rule, that no Man can plead *Ignorance* of it, who doth not wilfully shut his own Eyes. 'Tis true, whilst *Laws*, though never so *plain* and *useful* in themselves, are yet *obscure* and *perplexed* in their Promulgation,

tion, or *over-numerous,* they may prove a Snare, rather than a Guide, and make more Controversies than they can decide, and lose much of their force by being spun out into *nice* and *subtle* Disputes: they may fall *short* of their Aim, by not being able to reach the greater Part of those Persons whom they designed to direct; who either have not *Leisure* sufficient to attend to; or *Capacities* to understand them, or *Sagacity* to apply them in all Opportunities of Action. But as for this *general Rule* of Justice; it is always at Hand, and we carry it about us in our own Breasts: for this is the *peculiar* Advantage of this Rule, that by it we may very *easily* discern all the Specialities of our Duty, without looking Abroad, or having recourse to external Instructions. So that by it we may be perfect Lawgivers, skilful Judges, and faithful Casuists to our *own Souls:* For it is legible to those that have no *Letters,* and lies open and obvious to the most *Rude* and *Ignorant.* We need not search ancient *Records,* or dark *Repositories,* revolve and ruminate upon old *Sentences,* or new *Glosses,* or rove about the World to examine the various *Customs* and *Constitutions* of Countries: we need not soar to *Heaven,* or dive to *Hell* in quest of our Duty: For if we will but return into our *Selves,* and look into our own *Hearts,* there we may find it copied and engraven in *legible Characters.* For when any Opportunity of dealing justly by *another* presents itself to us, it is but asking *our Selves* how we would be dealt by in the *same* Circumstances; and our *Answer* to that is our *Duty* to those we deal with: I know very well how I should *expect* to be used if my Neighbour and I had *changed Persons* and Circumstances: my own Heart tells me, that I should think it reasonable to expect *such Measures* from *him,* and that therefore he hath just Reason to expect the *same* from *me.* So that in most Cases of Justice between Man and Man, every Man, if he pleases, may be his *own* Casuist: for it is but *exchanging* Persons, and Circumstances with his *Neighbour,* which is quickly done, and then applying this *general Rule* to his particular Dealings with him; and his *own Heart* will soon tell him what he is to do, and very rarely, but never grosly, misinform him. For by thus *changing* the Scales, and making *another* Man's Case my *own,* I take the fairest and readiest Way to understand what is *right* and *due* to him: for now to be sure my *Passion,* and *Self-Interest* will not incline me one way more than another; and even that *Selfishness,* which inclines me to wrong *another* Man for my own Advantage, will likewise render me unwilling, when the Scales are *changed,* that *another* Man should wrong me; and that *Self-conceit,* which makes me apt to scorn and despise *another,* will make me unwilling to be scorned and despised *my self*; and so when I consult my self how I would be dealt by, those very *Passions* which incline me to *wrong others,* will instruct me to *right them.* So that there is no *Rule* in the World can be press'd with fewer *Incumbrances,* or darkned with less *Intricacy*; none that can lie open to larger *Use,* or be readier to present *Application,* or more obvious to all Sizes of *Apprehension* than This, which is the *Measure* and *Standard* of our Dealings and Intercourses with one another. So that there is no pleading *Ignorance* to excuse, or palliate any great Violations of the Laws of Righteousness; since in all Matters of Moment every Man may easily understand how he ought to deal by every Man, if he would but take care to consult the Oracle in his *own Breast,* and ask himself how he would expect to be dealt by, were he placed in the Circumstances of those he deals with. And when Men won't *understand* their Duty, when it lies so plainly before them; or won't *do* their Duty, when they do *understand* it; what Colour of Excuse can be made for them? Were the *Rule* of our Duty so *obscure* as that we could not easily apprehend it, the Weakness of our *Understanding* might partly excuse the Error of our *Wills,* and render it *pitiable* and *pardonable,* though not altogether *innocent*; but when it lies so *full* in our *View* as that we cannot but discern it, if we

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will but open our Eyes, and fairly consult our own Minds and Thoughts, our *Understanding* is acquitted, and our *Will* only is chargeable with our Folly, and Wickedness: so that now we sin at our own Peril, and leap Head-long into mischief with our Eyes open. But as for *Injustice*, the Guilt of it is so open and visible, that however our other Sins may be excused by our *Ignorance*; and mitigated or connived at upon the score of the *natural Defects* of our *Understanding*, this can admit of no Cloak, or Extenuation; because whenever a Man deals unjustly by another, his *Conscience* will be sure to tell him (if he puts the Question to it) that he would not be so dealt with, were the Case and Circumstances *his own*. So that when we come to give up our Accounts at the *Tribunal* of *God*, and to answer for our unrighteous Dealings with one another, they will so stare us in the Face, that we shall be able to make no Excuse or Apology for them; but our own Consciences will be forced to cry *Guilty*, *Guilty*, to anticipate our Doom, and when it is past, to approve and second it with a *Just and Righteous art thou, O Lord, in all thy Ways.* For when the *Rule* of Justice lies so very plain, and open to our very *Faculties*, what can be said if we do unjustly, but that we are obstinate and wilful and incorrigible *Robbers*, that can claim no Indulgence, deserve no Pity, and pretend to no Mitigation of our Stripes, since we *knew* our Master's Will and *did it not*?

IV. Consider the *Fruitlesness* and *Mischievousness* of unjust Dealing to *our Selves*. For the usual Bait of Injustice is *Gain* and *Profit*, we deplume our *Neighbour*'s Wings with an intent to feather *our own Nests*, and invade *other* Men's Properties to enrich *our Selves* with their Spoils: This is the *common Game* that Fraud and Oppression pursues and flies at, though usually they fly short or beyond it, and instead of enriching Men do finally damage, and impoverish them. For how successful soever unjust Dealing may sometimes prove to the *raising* a Man's Fortune and Estate, 'tis in its natural Tendency an effectual way to *impair* and *ruin* it, because by dealing unjustly, he makes it every Man's Interest to forsake and abandon him, and in effect sets a Cross upon his own Door to warn all Customers from entering. For who would willingly have to do with a *Knave*, that always lies upon the Catch, waiting Opportunities to rook and cozen him; with whom he can neither speak, nor act securely, but must be forced to stand upon his own *Guard* with him, and treat him with the same *Circumspection* and *Cautiousness* as Conjurers do their Devils, for fear of being snapt and torn in pieces by him? And how is it possible for a Man to *thrive*, when no Body cares to *deal* with him; when his House is haunted, and his *Frauds* and *Cozenages* appear like Spectres at his Door, to frighten all Men from his Shop and Conversation? And accordingly you see that Justice and Honesty in Dealing is so *absolutely necessary* to Mens thriving in the World, that even they who *are* not Honest, are fain to *seem* so: but for a Man to seem to be Honest, there is no way so certain and secure, as to be *really* so; for if he be not, it is a thousand to one but the Events of Things will one time or other unmask and discover him. No Man can be secure of *Privacy* in an unjust Action, but let him carry it never so secretly and demurely, one Accident or other will draw the Curtain, and bring to light the *Fraud* and *Villany* behind it: and when it doth, what will Men say: *He has cheated me once. and that was his Fault, but if he cheat me again it will be mine as well as his; and I shall richly deserve the second Wrong, if I will take no warning by the first.* So that how much soever a Man may gain by a *present* Cheat, he is sure, if he be discover'd, to lose his Correspondent, by whom in a few Years he might have honestly gotten ten times more: besides that, either his *Resentment* of the Injury he hath received, or else his *Charity* to others, will oblige him to *divulge* the Knavery, and to *warn others* by it not to have any Thing to do with the detected Knave that wrong'd and abus'd him. And when once a Man's *Credit* is blasted by the report of a foul and dis-

honest Action, it is a thousand to one but he will lose back in his *Trade* all that he gain'd by his *Cheat*, and twenty times more; and then if once he begin to sink, there is no recovering of him; for *Estate* and *Credit* are the two Wings that bear Men up in the World, and therefore if, when he hath clipt the Wings of his *Credit*, his *Estate* should fail him too, he must decline and sink without Remedy. For Credit is like a *Looking-Glass*, which when only *sullied* by an unwholsome Breath may be wiped clean again; but if once it is *crack'd*, it is never to be repaired. So that considering all, *Fraud* and *Injustice* is as great an Error in *Politicks*, as in *Morals*, and doth bespeak a Man to have as little *Wit*, as *Honesty*; and in plain *English*, to be as much a *Fool*, as a *Knave*. But suppose the best, and that which sometimes happens, that a Man should *thrive* by his *Fraud* and *Injustice*, and grow *great* and *prosperous* in the World; alass! what *Comfort* can he take in his ill-gotten Wealth; when every Part of it throws Guilt in his Face, and awakens some dire Reflection in his *Conscience*? For, as I shewed you before, of all Sins that of *Injustice* admits the least Excuse and Mitigation; the Sense of it clings so close to a Man's *Conscience*, that he can never pluck it off without pulling away his Conscience with it, and rooting out of his Mind all the Sense of *Religion*, and of *Good* and *Evil*. So that unless the Man turn an assured *Atheist*, or a stupid *Sot*, it will be impossible for him to enjoy his unjust Possessions, without great *Recoilings* and *Convulsions* of Conscience; because his unjust Possessions will, like the Adulterer's Bastard, be a *standing Reproach* to him, and a perpetual *Remembrancer* of his Guilt and Shame. And when that which a Man enjoys and lives upon, when the Meat which he gluts, and the Drink which he guzzles, the Cloaths which he rustles and flaunts in, shall thus *reproach* and *upbraid* him; O wretched Man! We are the Price of thy *Innocence*, thy *Soul*, and thy *Eternal Happiness*; for us thou hast damn'd thy self, and freely consign'd thy immortal Spirit to everlasting Horror and Confusion; when his Bags and Coffers cry Guilty, Guilty, and he sees a *Mene Tekel* on the Walls of every Room in his House, and every Thing he enjoys *wispers* some Accusation against him; what *Comfort* can he take in the Purchase of his Frauds and Oppressions; Were it not a thousand times better for him to have lived contentedly on a brown Morsel, than thus to fare deliciously every Day with a *vex'd* and a *tormented* Mind; And yet this is commonly the Fate of *unjust Possessors*, who under the Disguise of a *chearful* Countenance too commonly wear *woful* Hearts, and, like Tragedies bound in guilded Covers, are only gay and splendid *without*, but full of Stabs and Wounds, *within*. But suppose that in a continued Tumult of Excesses and Riots, they should make a shift, whilst they *live*, to drown the Cries of their guilty Consciences; yet in all probability whenever *Death* threatens, or approaches them in a Disease, and sets them within ken of Eternity, their *Conscience* in despite of them will *rouse* and *awake*, and raise a hideous *out-cry* against them: for now their Last *Will* and *Testament* will set before them a woful Catalogue of uncancelled Guilts, and every ill-gotten Penny they have there bequeathed, will put them in Mind of their approaching *Damnation*; and dictate *Dread* and *Horror* to their Consciences, which in a desperate rage will fly in their Faces, and tell them to their Teeth, that they are *Cheats* and *Knaves* and *Reprobates*; that their *Legacies* are the Fruits of their *Sins*, the Purchase of their *Frauds* and *Oppressions*; and that for that which they are now bequeathing to *others*, they have long ago bequeathed their *Soul* to the Devil, who now stands ready to seize on it, and carry it away to those dark Prisons of Horror, where he keeps his miserable Slaves under a dreadful Expectation of their *eternal Judgment*. So that should any Man chance to thrive, and grow rich by *Injustice*, yet 'tis a thousand to one but either *living* or *dying*, or *both*, his *Riches* will prove a far worse Plague to him than *Poverty* it self; and if so, who

but a mad Man would ever abandon himſelf to a Folly ſo *fruitleſs* and *miſchievous?*

Fifthly and Laſtly, conſider the high Provocation that *Injuſtice* gives to *God.* For *God*, as I have ſhewed you before, is the *Author* of thoſe Rights which Men are inveſted with, whether they be *natural*, or *acquired:* and being the *Author* of them, he is more eſpecially obliged to *aſſert* and *vindicate* them, to maintain his own Beqeſts and Donations, and not ſuffer thoſe to go unpuniſh'd, who preſume to purloin or alienate them from their *rightful Owners.* For he who wrongfully deprives a Man of any Right; deprives him of what *God* hath given him, ſnatches *God's* Goods out of thoſe Hands in which he hath truſted and depoſited them; and in ſo doing robs *God* himſelf, and ſeizes his Goods without his Leave. So that every unjuſt Invaſion of another's Rights is an Injury to *God*, who is the ſupreme Proprietor, from whom all Right and Property deſcends. For ſince every *Man*'s Right is derived from, and founded on the Right of *God*, whoſoever treſpaſſes on the *one*, muſt neceſſarily invade the *other:* all that is ours we hold by Tenant-Right from the great Landlord of the World, whoſe *ſupreme* and *Independent Propriety* is the Ground, and Foundation on which all our juſt *Claims* and *Properties* depend. He therefore who by Fraud or Violence diſpoſſeſſes any Tenant of *God*, or ſeizes any part of the Property which he hath farmed out to him; doth in ſo doing eject the *Landlord*, as well as the *Tenant*, and ſo far as in him lies turn *God* out of his own World, and *uſurp* his eternal Right and *Dominion.* And ſo long as he holds what God hath ſet to another, he holds not as a *Tenant* of *God*, but as a *Robber* and an *Invader* of him: when he ſeiz'd his unjuſt Poſſeſſion, he ſnatched *God's* Goods out of his Hands; and while he detains them, he doth in effect declare that he will keep *God*'s Goods in deſpite of him; that as he hath already thruſt him out of this Part of his Creation, ſo he is reſolved to keep him out as long as he is able, and never to permit him to re-enter upon it, ſo long as he can maintain and defend it againſt him. Since therefore we claim by *God*'s own Tenure, and all our Rights do finally Iſſue and reſolve into *his*; he is peculiarly concerned to *aſſert*, and *vindicate* them, becauſe they are all *his own.* Hence is that Paſſage quoted by S.^t^ *Paul* from God's own Mouth, *Vengeance is mine and I will repay it*, Rom. xii. 19. for what is Vengeance, but only a *Retribution* of *Puniſhments* for Wrongs, and Injuries received; And therefore ſince all Rights are *God*'s, and conſequently all Wrongs do redound upon *him*, Vengeance, or Retribution of Wrongs muſt neceſſarily be *his Right* and *Prerogative*; and it being *his*, he will be ſure to repay it one time or other: and though he may defer it a while out of *wiſe* and *gracious* Ends, yet in the long run it will appear that his *Forbearance* is no *Payment*, and the longer he is repaying the *Principal*, the greater Sum the *Intereſt* of his Vengeance will at laſt amount to. For what higher *Outrage* can you do to *God* who is an immortal Being, infinitely removed from all Paſſion and Suffering, than to break in upon him as you do by every Act of *Injuſtice*, and deſpoil him of his Goods, and rifle his Houſe before his Face; to turn him out of Doors as it were, and ſhut up his own Creation againſt him; and in effect to tell him, that from henceforth you are reſolved to be your *own God*; to live at *his* Allowance no longer, but to carve and divide for *your Selves*; and that ſo far as *you* are concern'd, *he* ſhall have no more to do in *his own* World, but that you will ſupply his Place in his Family, and order his Affairs, and diſpoſe of his Goods, as you think convenient. Which is ſuch an *Intolerable Indignity*, as cannot but kindle a Reſentment in the moſt *indulgent Nature*, and arm even an *infinite Patience* with Thunderbolts: and accordingly if you conſult either ſacred, or Prophane Hiſtory, you will find that there is no one Sin which God hath ſo *remarkably* puniſhed in this World, as this of *Injuſtice* between Man and Man. For this he hath been obſerved, to plague not only the *unjuſt Perſons* themſelves with ſuch

Judgments,

Judgments, as have ecchoed and resounded their Crimes; but hath many times entailed a Curse upon their *Posterity*; which like a flying Scourge hath pursued them Generation after Generation, and marked their Descendants with dire Events, like a Coat of Arms charged with Crosses and Crosslets: For this he hath pursued whole *Nations* to utter Ruin and Desolation; and 'twas for this that he cut off his own People the *Jews*, and converted his beloved *Sharon* into an eternal *Desart*. And if his Vengeance thus smoke against Injustice in *this Life*, which is the School of *Discipline*; how will it burn against it in the *other*, which is the Stage of *Execution!* If the *Posterity* of the Unjust be thus rack'd for it upon *Earth*, how will the Unjust *themselves* roar for it in *Hell!* In a Word, if these *temporary* Flashes and Eruptions of God's Vengeance against Unrighteousness be so dreadful, how terribly must it flame against it within the bottomless *Vulcano's* of *everlasting* Burnings! Wherefore as you would not provoke an infinite Vengeance which you can neither withstand or indure, it concerns you diligently to avoid all Unrighteousness in your Dealings and Intercourse with Men; which if you take Care to do, and to add to your *Justice Mercy*, to your *Mercy Sobriety*, and to your *Sobriety* walking *humbly* with God, you shall be sure not only to escape his Vengeance both here and hereafter, but also from these *Seeds* of *Holiness* to reap *everlasting Life*.

Chap. I.

Of Mercy, *as it relieves the Miseries of the Soul.*

AFTER the Consideration of *Justice*, that of *Mercy* is to follow: And the proper Object of *Mercy* being *Misery*, it will be requisite in order to the explainnig of this Virtue, to consider what those human *Miseries* are which it relates to, and what are the particular *Acts* of *Mercy* which belong to them. Now the *Miseries* which Men are liable to in this Life are reducible to these Heads: *First*, Either they are such as do affect their *Souls*; or, *Secondly*, Such as do affect their *Bodies*.

I. The Miseries which do affect the *Souls* of Men; which may all be comprehended under these five Heads: 1. *Sorrow* and *Dejection* of Mind. 2. *Errors* and *Mistakes* in Matters of lesser Importance 3. *Blindness* and *Ignorance* in Things of the greatest Moment. 4. *Malice* and *Obstinacy* of Will in destructive and mischievous Courses. 5. *Impotency* or *want* of *Power* to free and recover themselves of them.

I. One of the Miseries which affects Mens Souls is *Sorrow* and *Dejection* of Mind, which like a Consumption in the Body, preys upon the Soul, dispirits its Faculties, and renders them *faint* and *languid* in all their Operations. *By Sorrow of the Heart*, saith *Solomon, the Spirit is broken*, Prov. xv. 13. And indeed *Sorrow* is that *Sense* of the Soul by which it *feels* and *perceives* its own *Miseries*, and without which it could no more be affected with calamitous things, than Iron is with the Blows of the Hammer. This is the *Sting* by which all sad Accidents do wound and inflame our Spirits, and with which the least Title in the World can make us miserable in the most prosperous State, and turn all our Enjoyments into Wormwood. *Sorrow* therefore and *Dejection* of Mind being the Point and Edge of all our *Miseries*, is upon that Account a most *proper* Object of Mercy; whose peculiar Province it is to ease and relieve the Miserable. Whensoever therefore we do converse with the Sorrowful and Dejected, the *Law* of *Mercy* requires us to do what we can to

support and *relieve* them; and that first by sympathizing with them, by sharing their Griefs, condoling their Sorrows, and pitying their Calamities, or as the Apostle expresses it, *Rom.* xii. 15. *By weeping with those that weep*; which upon the *first* breaking out of great Sorrow is the properest *Remedy* we can administer. For when a Passion is in its *Rage* and *Fury*, it is no more to be pacified with *Reason* and *Discourse*, than the Northern Wind is with a Lecture of Consolation; and till it hath *tired* itself a while with the *Transports* of its own Rage, to endeavour to check it with *Arguments* would be as vain an Attempt, as to dam up the *Cataracts* of *Nile* with a Hurdle; which instead of *suppressing* their Violence would but cause them to roar the louder, and to swell and break forth into *more impetuous* Torrents. The best Course therefore that can be taken at present, is to *humour* and *gratify* the Passion by condoling with it the Calamity which caused it. For as the *fiercest* Creatures are more easily tamed by *gentle* Management, by soothing and stroaking and being kindly treated; so the best Expedient to mitigate *violent* Sorrows is, to *sooth* and *indulge* them till their Violence is abated; to conform ourselves to them, and mingle our Tears and Lamentations with them. And accordingly we find that to be *pitied* and *condoled* is a real Ease and Comfort to the *Miserable*; and that so far as we *partake* with other Mens Griefs, we do translate them out of their Breasts into our *own:* So that by sympathizing with them, we take part of their Sorrows from them, which like Dimensions may be so divided by us, as to become at least *insensible*, if not *indivisible.* Wherefore, since 'tis not the Tears of their *own* Eyes only, but of their *Friends* Eyes too, that do exhaust the Current of their Griefs; which falling into many Streams will run more peaceably, and by degrees contract themselves into narrower Channels; it is an Act of *Mercy* that we owe to the Sorrowful to *condole* and *sympathize* with them in their Afflictions. And not to do so, or instead of that, to be either insensible of their Sorrows, or to take no other Notice of them, but to *mock* at, and deride them, is a certain Argument of a *cruel* and *barbarous* Temper. And as we ought to *sympathize* with them in their Sorrows, so, when they are capable of it, we are obliged by the Laws of *Mercy* to use our best Endeavour to *support* and *comfort* them under their Heaviness, as the Apostle exhorts, 2 *Cor.* 1. 4. sometimes by lessening and extenuating their Affliction, sometimes by applying to them the Consolations of Religion, sometimes by representing to them the Evil of immoderate Sorrow, and sometimes by diverting them with innocent Pleasantry, and Chearfulness. For *Sorrow* diverts the Mind from all *comfortable* Thoughts, and like a black Perspective-Glass represents all Objects mournfully and tragically: So that unless *others* will have Mercy on it and thrusts Comforts into its Mouth, it will have no Mercy on *itself*, but sit pining and languishing under incessant Grief and Discontentedness. Wherefore to *chear* and *comfort* dejected and sorrowful Minds, is both a *great* and *necessary* Act of *Mercy*; as on the contrary for any Man causelesly to afflict and grieve another, to add Weight to his Sorrows, and Wormwood to his Gall, and take Pleasure in his Griefs and Vexations, is not only *inhumane* but *diabolical:* For to rejoyce in the Afflictions, and to recreate with the Sorrows of the Miserable, is the blackest Character that can be given to a *Devil.*

II. Another of the *Miseries* which affect Mens Souls is, the *Errors* and *Mistakes* they are liable to in Matters of less Importance. The Understandings of Men are naturally weak and short-sighted, apt to be imposed upon by *Shews* of Truth, and to swallow *Lyes* for Realities, when they are gilded with a fair Probability: And though we make loud Boasts of *Certainty*, and *Demonstration*, yet God knows many times our *Certainties* are the Dictates of our wild *Imaginations*, and our *Demonstrations* prove nothing but our own *Confidence.* For *Prejudice*, *Error*, and *Inadvertency* are as incident to our Minds, as *Diseases* are to our Bodies; and there are certain *Springs* and *Principles* in all Mens Understandings, which do render them liable to be turned about

by *strange* and *unaccountable* Impulses. And generally our *Affections* are apt to creep into and mingle with our *Arguings*, so that in most of our Disputes the *Argument* on both Sides is commonly *lost*, and the Controversie determines in a Conflict of *Affections*. And in a Word, the Generality of Men are unalterably *determined* in their Opinions by their *Fear* or their *Hope*, or their *Prejudices*, or the Prepossessions of their *Educations*; which, like so many Whirl-pools, having once sucked a Man in, do most commonly keep his Head under Water, and never permit him to emerge and recover himself: And if the Prejudices of our *Education* happen to be false, in all our *Reasonings* from them we do only spin out one Error from another, and so our Thoughts wander in a Labyrinth, wherein the farther we go, the more we lose our selves. And as our *Understandings* are very *dim sighted*, so the *Paths* wherein we seek after Truth, are commonly very *obscure* and *intricate*: For whilst we rack our Brains with nice and curious Speculations, we generally but delude our Reason with the little Images and airy Phantasms of Things; while we weary our Eyes with laborious Reading, our Books prove often the *Tombs*, than the *Shrines* of Truth; and while we pursue it through the stormy Seas of Controversie, there we are tossed with endless Doubts and Difficulties, which like the rolling Waves croud one upon the Neck of another. And thus we grope to and fro in the dark, and 'tis a very great Acquist, if in our Search after *Knowledge* we do but discover our own *Ignorance*. 'Tis true, as for those necessary Truths which are the *Fundamentals* of our everlasting Well-being, God hath taken Care to propose them to us in so *clear* a Light, that no Man can be ignorant of them who sincerely inquires after them: But commonly the *remoter* any Truth is from a necessary Article, the *less plain* and *obvious* it is to our Understanding; and therefore if in *these* we do err and mistake, it is not to be wondered at, considering how weak our Understanding is, and what disadvantagious Prospect it hath. And tho' *these* our *Mistakes* are many Times caused by a corrupt *Biass* in our Wills, by a factious Prejudice, or an over-weening Self-conceit, by a carnal Interest, or a supine Neglect of the Means of a better Information; which according as they are more or less *wilful*, do render our Errors Sins of *Infirmity*, or damnable *Heresie*: Yet very often they are meerly the Effects of a *weak-sighted* Mind, that is either unavoidably seduced with fair *Shews*, or innocently tinctured with false *Prejudices*: And in this Case they are not our *Crimes*, but our *Miseries*. For we can no more be obliged not to *err* in our Opinions, than not to be *Sick* or *Hungry*; all that we are bound to is to understand as well as we *can* and if when we do so, we should happen to be deceived, we have a just Claim to *Mercy* and *Commiseration*. And the proper Acts of *Mercy* which this miserable Case requires, are *first* Forbearance and *Toleration*; *with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love*; as the Apostle expresses it, *Ephes.* iv. 2. that is, abstaining from all harsh Judgments and severe Censures, from all peevish Separations from our Communion and Charity, and mutually treating each other with all the Candor and Forbearance, Lenity and Indulgence, that a pitiable Case requires and deserves. For if I am in the Right, and my Brother in the Wrong, to be sure it is *my Happiness*, and perhaps 'tis only *his Misery*; and what an unmerciful Part is it for me to damn or censure, or rigorously treat him, meerly because it is *his* Lot to be *miserable*, and *mine* to be *happy*? What if he hath had the ill Luck to have his Brains cast into a different Figure from mine, by reading different *Books*, or keeping different *Company*, or being prejudiced by a different *Education*; is it reasonable that I should hate or severely judge him, because he hath been *unfortunate*, and perhaps could no more prevent those little Errors wherein he differs from me, than he could the Moles on his Skin, or the different Colour of his Hair and Complexion: What is this but to load the oppres-

sed,

fed, and heap Misery upon Misery, which is the most unmanly Cruelty? In this Case therefore the Laws of *Mercy* require us, as private Christians, to *bear* with one another's Mistakes, to make the most *candid Judgment* and *Construction* of them, and interpret them in the most *favourable* Sense; and not to separate from one another for Trifles, or fly out into Bitterness and Animosity upon every little Opinion which we judge false and erroneous.

II. Another Act of *Mercy* which this Case requires, is to endeavour by all *prudent* and *peaceable* Ways to *rectify* one another's Mistakes. If I behold my Brother's Understanding labouring under the Misery of *Error*, Mercy will incline me, so far as I am able to endeavour his *Relief* and *Recovery*; an Error in the *Understanding* being as great a Misfortune, as a Wound or a Disease in the *Body*; and what merciful Mind can behold that noblest Part of a Man diseased and affected, without being strongly inclined to administer what it can towards its Health and Recovery? And as Mercy will *incline* us to it, so it will *direct* us to the properest Means of effecting it; for if it be *Mercy* and *Compassion* that moves me to rectify my Brother's Mistake, it will move me to endeavour it with the *Spirit of Meekness*, which, as the Apostle assures us, *Gal.* vi. 1. is the most likely Expedient to *restore* him; that is, calmly and compassionately to represent to him his Error, so that he may see it is not my Design to *expose* or *upbraid* him, to *insult* over his Folly, or to *triumph* in his Confutation; but merely to set his Understanding to *rights*, and to *rescue* it from the Mistakes in which it is unfortunately entangled. And this, if any thing, will dispose him to *listen* to my Reasons, and *make way* for my Arguments to enter into his Mind; whereas by deriding his Error, or persecuting it with sharp and bitter *Invectives*, I shall engage his *Passion* to defend it, as well as his *Reason*; for witty Jests and severe Sarcasms may *provoke* an Adversary, but will never *convince* him. And as Mercy will direct me to treat my erring Brother with *Meekness* and *Compassion*, so it will also instruct me to *teaze* and *importune* him with perpetual Disputacity; for this will look rather an Affectation of *wrangling* with him, than a Desire of *convincing* him; but to wait the fairest *Opportunity* of remonstrating his Error to him, when he is most at Leisure, and most *disposed* to attend to Reason and Argument. For Errors, like Paper Kites, are many times raised and kept up in Mens Minds, by the incessant Bluster of *ever-fierce Opposition*.

III. Another of the *Miseries* which affect Mens Souls is *Blindness* and *Ignorance* in Things of the greatest Moment, which is doubtless one of the greatest Miseries that can happen to a *Soul* in this Life. For the Interests of *Souls* are *everlasting*, they being born to live happily or miserably for ever; and their Happiness depending upon the right Use of their *Liberty*, and this upon their *Knowledge* to use and determine it; it will be impossible for them to attain to eternal Happiness, or escape eternal Misery, without *Knowledge* to steer and direct them, so that whilst they are *ignorant* of those *Truths*, by which their Liberty is to be governed, and their Choices and Actions to be determined to eternal Happiness, they are under a very *remote Incapacity* of being happy. And what a miserable Case is this, to have an *eternal Interest* at stake, and not to *know* how to manage it? To be travelling on this narrow Line, or Frontier which divides those boundless Continents of everlasting Happiness and Misery, and not to see one Step of our Way before us, nor to perceive whither we are going, till we are gone beyond Recovery? Should you behold a *blind Man* walking upon the Brink of a fatal Precipice, without any Guide to direct his Steps, and secure him from the neighbouring Danger, would not your Hearts ake and your Bowels yearn for him? Would you not call out to him and warn him of his Danger, and make all the Haste you could to take him by the Hand and conduct him to a Place of Safety? And is it not a much more deplorable Sight, to see a poor *ignorant Wretch* walking blindfold on the Brinks of *Hell*, and for want of Sight to direct him Heaven-wards ready to blunder at every Step into the Pit of Destruction?

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Can you behold ſuch a miſerable Object with a *regardleſs* Eye, and yet pretend to *Pity* or *Campaſſion?* Can you ſit ſtill and ſee him caſt himſelf into the Mouth of ſuch horrid and amazing Danger, without *warning* him of it, and endeavouring by the beſt *Inſtructions* you can give him to lead him off, and direct him to eternal Happineſs? Surely did we but duely underſtand the Worth and the Danger of *Souls*, ſuch a woful Spectacle could not but affect our Bowels, and excite us to employ all our Power to convince him of the Danger he is running into, and inſtruct him how to avoid it. For this is the proper Act of *Mercy* which this miſerable Caſe calls for, *viz.* to endeavour to diſpel that *fatal Ignorance* which ſurrounds Mens Minds, and to enlighten them with all thoſe Principles of *Religion* which are neceſſary to conduct them to eternal Happineſs. For it is not ſo great a Piece of Mercy to give a *ſtarving* Man Bread, as it is to inform an *ignorant* Sinner and feed his famiſhed Mind with the Bread of Life; becauſe without the former 'tis only his *Body* will die, whereas without the latter his *Body* and *Soul* will die for ever. When therefore we know any Perſons to be groſly *ignorant* of God and Religion, the Laws of *Mercy* require us to uſe all prudent Means to *inſtruct* and *inform* them; and if they are in our Power, as our *Children* and *Servants* are, to take care to train them up in the Fear and *Nurture of the Lord*, to catechize and inſtruct them in the Doctrines of Faith, and ſeaſon their Minds with the Principles of *pure Religion*; that ſo underſtanding their Duty, and the vaſt and indiſpenſable *Obligations* of it, they may not leap blindfold into eternal Perdition. For whilſt we train them up in *Blindneſs* and *Ignorance* we do in effect predeſtinate them to *eternal Ruin*, and like thoſe barbarous Parents that offered up their Children to *Moloch*, devote them as ſo many Sacrifices to the Devil. Wherefore we ſtand obliged, not only in *Fidelity* to *God*, who hath committed their Souls to our charge, and will one Day require an Account of them at our Hands; but alſo in *Mercy* to *them*, that they may not periſh eternally for lack of Knowledge; to take all poſſible care to *inſtruct* their Minds in the Duties and Obligations of *Religion*. And as *Mercy* obliges us to inſtruct our *Children* and *Servants* who are in our power and diſpoſal, ſo it alſo obliges us to inſtruct *others* whom we know to be *ignorant* of God and their Duty; to take all fair Opportunities to inſinuate the Knowledge of divine Things to them, and to cultivate their rude and barbarous Minds with the Principles of *Vertue* and *Religion*; or at leaſt where we cannot be admitted to do them this good Office *our ſelves*, or our endeavouring it may be looked upon as a Piece of *Sauccineſs* and *Pedantry*, to recommend their miſerable Caſe to *others* who have more *Authority* with them, or from whoſe Hands it may be better taken. For ſure if we have any *Mercy* or *Compaſſion* in us, we cannot ſit ſtill, and ſee a miſerable Wretch wandring in the Dark upon the Confines of *eternal Ruin*, without endeavouring by ſome way or other to *reduce* and *light* him back to Heaven. Hence 2 *Tim.* ii. 25, 26. 'tis made a neceſſary Act of Mercy, *Meekly to inſtruct thoſe that oppoſe themſelves*, that is, out of Ignorance of the Goſpel, *if God peradventure will give them Repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth, that they may recover themſelves out of the Snare of the Devil who are taken captive by him at his Will.*

IV. Another of the *Miſeries* which affect Mens Souls, is *Malice* and *Obſtinacy* of Will in miſchievous and deſtructive Courſes; which is doubtleſs one of the *greateſt Infelicities* that can happen to a Man on this Side Hell. For to be obſtinate in miſchievous Courſes, is but one Remove from the forlorn Condition of a *damned Soul*, which being fixed and determined to Evil by the invincible *Obſtinacy* of its own Will, lies under a *fatal Neceſſity* of being its own eternal Hell and Devil: So that every Degree of *Obſtinacy* in Wickedneſs is a nearer Approach to *eternal Damnation*, and will at laſt inevitably center in it, if it be not ſtopped in its Courſe and Progreſs, and cured by a timely Application. Now what a deplorable Sight is this, to ſee a *wretched Soul* obſtinately purſuing his own deſtruction, and even *forcing* his way to Hell through

all the Resistances of his *Religion*, and *Reason*, and *Conscience* together? Should you see a mad Man break loose from his Chain, and run his Head against a Wall, or catch up a Knife or Dagger and thrust it into his own Breast, and repeat Stab after Stab, in despite of all your Counsels and Dissuasives, would you not pity and lament his Case, and heartily wish him deprived of all that Liberty which he employs only to his own Destruction? And is it not a much more lamentable Spectacle, to see a *wild* and *desperate Soul* break loose from those Ties of *Religion* and *Conscience* which bind it to its Duty and Happiness; and in a deaf and obstinate Rage seize on the Weapons of Perdition, and plunge them into its own Bowels, and by *repeated Acts* of Wickedness embrue its Hands in its own Blood; whilst the blessed *Spirit*, with its own natural Sense of God, are struggling with it in vain, and fruitlesly endeavouring to disarm its desperate Fury, that it may not wound it self to eternal Death? What *merciful* Heart can forbear wishing. O would to God this miserable Soul had no Will, that it had not the Liberty to chuse or act! Would to God it were a Stone, or a Tree that have no Power to dispose of, or determine their own Motions, rather than be thus left at liberty as it is, only to murder and destroy it self: But since to wish thus would be in vain, who that hath any Pity can sit still and see a miserable Wretch thus outrage himself, without endeavouring to hold his Hands, and bind him down with *Reason* and good *Counsel*? And this is the proper Act of *Mercy* which the miserable Case in hand requires, *viz.* When we see an *obstinate Sinner* resolutely pursuing his own Destruction, to endeavour by prudent and seasonable *Reproofs*, by pious and compassionate *Counsels*, and *Admonitions*, to reclaim him from the Error of his Way. For thus our holy Religion directs us to *exhort one another daily while it is called to day, lest any of us should be hardened*, i. e. irrecoverably hardened, *through the deceitfulness of Sin*, Heb. iii. 13. And how acceptable a Work this is to God, St. *James* informs us, chap. v. 19, 20. *Brethren if any of you err from the Truth, and one convert him, let him know that he who converteth a Sinner from the Error of his Way shall save a Soul from Death, and shall hide a Multitude of Sins.* Whereas by permitting Men to run on in their Sins without any Check or Disturbance, under a Pretence of *Complaisance* and *Civility*, is as much as to say; *Sir, you are going headlong to Destruction, and go you are like for me; for my part whether you are damned, or saved, is much at one to me; if you are minded to make an Experiment of Damnation, much good may it do you; I know should I attempt to hinder or disturb you, you will think me rude and troublesome, and therefore rather than I will run the hazard, e'en let the Devil take you.* And would it not be a high Compliment, if you saw a Man plunging a Sword into his Bowels, to cry, *Sir, I would hold your Arm, but that I am afraid you will be angry with me?* 'Tis true, this merciful Work of *Reproof* and *Admonition* ought to be managed with a great deal of *Caution:* If the Person we reprove be out of our Power, we ought to observe the *mollia tempora fandi*; to forbear him till his Passion is down, or his intemperate Draught digested, till his Mind is *sedate* and *calm*, and best disposed to attend to and receive a pious *Admonition:* For he who reproves a Man when his Mind is disordered by *Passion* or *Intemperance* doth but preach Patience to a Northern Wind, which the more he endeavours to resist, the louder it will storm and bluster. But then when he is fit to receive a *Reprehension*, we ought to give it with the greatest *Privacy:* If he offend in *publick Conversation*, where there are other Witnesses of it besides our selves, unless the Matter be highly scandalous, it is sufficient for the present that we express our Dislike of it by the Severity of our *Looks*; and the Seriousness of our *Behaviour*; and afterwards between him and our selves, to remonstrate to him the Folly and Danger of his Sin. For to reprove Men *publickly* looks more like *Malice*, than *Mercy*; especially till we have first made Trial of *private Reprehensions*, and found them ineffectual. But then with our Reproofs we ought to take Care that we do not intermingle *Lightness*, or *Drollery* on the one Hand, nor *Passion*, or sharp *Invectives* on the

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other; but that we perform this *merciful* Office with the greatest *Modesty, Seriousness*, and *Compassion*; first endeavouring to *anticipate* the Offender's Displeasure, with kind and gentle Insinuations of our unfeigned Respects and Benevolence towards him; then representing his Crime to him with such a *compassionate* Sense of the Evil and Danger of it, as may convince him that *that* which renders us so severe to his Sin, is nothing but mere *Mercy* and *Charity* to his Soul: For to reprove a Man *lightly*, or *passionately*, looks more like a Design to *deride*, or *reproach* him for his Sin, than to *reclaim* him from it. Lastly, we ought to take great care that the Matter we reprove him for be *really culpable*, that we do not reprehend him for any *innocent* Freedom, no nor for every *trifling* Indecency; but only for *plain* and *unquestionable* Trespasses upon *Religion*; lest he should look upon our Reproofs as the Language of a *supercilious* and *morose* Spirit, that affects to domineer and find fault, and as such should despise and reject them. To avoid which it is highly adviseable, that while we *reprove* what is *evil* in him, we should *commend* what is *good*; that so our bitter Pill being sweetned with a due Commendation, may be rendred more palatable, and so go down with less Difficulty. But if the Offender whom we reprove be under our *Power* and *Government*, to our *Reproofs* and *Admonitions* we are obliged in Mercy to add *Correction*, if Necessity requires: for when it is come to that Pass, that our Child or Servant must *smart* or be *damned*, 'tis a cruel Softness and Indulgence, not to *chastize* him. Were your House on Fire, you would think it a Mercy to be rescued from the Flames, though you were dragged out by the Hair of the Head: And when the Flames of *Hell* are kindling about your Child or your Servant, would it not be much more merciful to snatch him away, though with *Smart* and *Violence*, than to stand still and let him *perish* for fear of *hurting* him? 'Tis true, *Correction* ought not to be used till *gentler Means* have been tried and found *ineffectual*: For Blows are Arguments for *Beasts* and for *beastly* Natures, fit only to be applied to stubborn and obstinate Tempers that are insensible of *Reason* and *Persuasion*; But when they are applied, it ought to be done with the greatest *Tenderness* and *Compassion*, when our Minds are *calm*, and our Passion *allayed*; that so the Offender may be sensible we do it not to wreak our *Spleen*, or vent and ease our *Fury*, but meerly to *reclaim* and *amend* him: The Sense of which will cause the Correction to operate more *kindly* in him, to affect his *Ingenuity*, as well as his *Fear*, and to melt him with the *Mercy*, whilst it breaks him with the *Severity* of it. This therefore is the *Mercy* which we are obliged to exercise towards *obstinate* and *stubborn* Offenders.

Fifthly and Lastly, Another of the *Miseries* which affect Men's Souls is *Impotency*, or Want of *Power* to recover themselves out of their vicious Courses; for a *vicious State* doth so miserably *weaken* and *disable* Men's Faculties, so *impair* the Health and Vigour of their Minds, that it is not in their *Power* to help and recover themselves out of it. For to their Recovery it is necessary, first, that their Thoughts should be determined to a fixed and exact *Consideration* of the Evil and Danger of their Sins, and of the blessed Hopes which God hath set before them to tempt them to renounce and forsake them: And then that these *Considerations* should so prevail upon and influence their *Wills*, as to captivate them into a thorough Resolution of Amendment; both which Effects are out of the Reach of the Sinner's *Power* considered singly, and without the Concurrence of the *Divine Grace*. For his Mind is so *depressed*, and *bowed* down towards these earthly and sensible Objects which have been hitherto the sole Companions of his Thoughts, that it is not *able* to raise up it self to the *Consideration* of Divine Things: And though now and then, a good Meditation may break in upon him, and seize upon his Thoughts, yet it cannot hold them a quarter of an Hour together; they are so *roving* and *slippery*, so *backward* and *averse* to any Thing that is *serious* and *divine*: So that unless the *Divine Spirit* lays hold upon them, and by his *Powerful* and *Importunate Inspirations* confines and fixes

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them, the *Man* will never be able to reduce them to any *fast* and *steady Consideration.* And when with the *Holy Spirit's* Assistance he hath effected this, he hath a *perverse* and *obstinate* Will to deal with; which no Considerations will be able to determine to a fixed Resolution of Amendment, but what are set home upon his Mind, and continually *actuated* and *enlivened* with the vigorous Influence of the *Spirit of God.* So that of himself every habitual Sinner is a most *weak* and *impotent* Creature, that with all the Powers of his *Mind* and *Will*, the utmost Efforts and Strugglings of his *own Faculties*, is not able without a *supernatural* Aid to rescue himself from Sin and Misery. For how many sorrowful Instances do we every Day converse with of Men, who in their *sober Thoughts* will sadly lament their own Follies, and blush in the Morning when they remember how their Brains were set a float by their last Night's Intemperance; who yet when the *next Temptation* beckons them to their Lust again, return as greedily to it as ever; and though, when they have *repeated* their Sin, they *curse* it and *resolve* against it, yet when they are tempted, sin again, and then weep and call themselves *miserable:* but still alass! the same *Inchantment* confines them to the same *Circle?* Now in this, *Philosophy* is at a stand, nor can there any other rational Account be given of it, but only the miserable *Frailty* and *Impotence* which Men contract by *vicious Courses.* What then is to be done for these miserable Persons in this their *forlorn* and *helpless* Condition? Why, besides all the above named Instances of *Mercy*, which we are obliged even for Pity's sake to apply to them; we are also bound in *Mercy* earnestly to recommend their woful Condition to the *God* of all Grace and Compassion, to beseech *him* to commiserate their Impotence, and with the out-stretched arm of *his Grace* to touch their dead Souls, and to raise them up into Newness of Life. For though in all Cases of Misery, *Prayer* is a proper Act of *Mercy*, yet there is none that doth so much need and call for our Prayers as *this:* For in all *other* Cases, either it is in the Power of the *Miserable* to help themselves, or it is in the Power of the *Merciful* to rescue and relieve them, or their Miseries are such as will quickly *end* and *expire* into eternal Ease; but as for the Misery of the *obstinate Sinner*, it is such as *God* alone can remedy, and such as if it be not remedied the sooner, will quickly determine in *endless* and *remediless* Misery. Wherefore if we have any *Bowels* of *Mercy* or *Compassion* in us, how can we sit still and see an impotent Sinner bound as it were to the Stake of Perdition, and not able to escape, though he sees the Flames of Hell rising round about him; without lifting up our Eyes to *God*, in whom alone his *Help* and *Salvation* lies, and earnestly imploring him to commiserate the perishing Wretch, and to snatch him from his approaching Ruin? Wherefore as the Law of *Mercy* obliges us in general to pray for *all* that are in *Misery*, so more especially for these *wretched Creatures*, who are already within the Suburbs of endless Misery; and unless *God* stretches forth his Arm and saves them, will be within a few moments beyond the reach of *Prayer* and *Mercy.* And thus you see what those Instances of *Mercy* are, which we are obliged to exercise towards the *Souls* of Men: And for the Enforcement of our Duty herein, I shall subjoyn some *Considerations* to excite our Christian Compassion.

I. Consider the inestimable *Worth* of those *Souls*, upon which your *Mercy* is to be employed. I confess, were the *Souls* of Men of the same Alloy with their *Bodies*, whose highest Pleasures do consist in the Gratification of a few brutish *Senses*, and are nothing else but the agreeable Touches of certain little Skins and Arteries, which are as inconsiderable as a Lutestring; and which, after they have repeated these Pleasures some Twenty or Thirty Years, do commonly expire into *Insensibility* and *Rottenness*; were, I say, their *Souls* of the *same* Make and Frame, it were not so much to be admired that we are so indifferently affected towards them. But these *precious Beings*

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ings are of a much nobler Constitution, their Faculties are made to relish *Godlike* and *Angelical Delights*, to drink for ever of that Divine *Nectar* of *Contemplation*, and *Holiness*, and *Love*, and to feast upon those Joys with which God entertains *himself*, and all his *Choir* of *Angels*: And as they are born to much higher Pleasures and Enjoyments, than those wretched *Bodies* which inclose them; so they are also made for an infinitely *longer Life* and *Duration*: for they must live *for ever* in inconceivable Happiness or Misery; and when their *Bodies* are mouldred into insensible Dust, be partaking either of the Raptures of *Angels*, or of the Horrors and Agonies of *Devils*. And can I think my self obliged in Mercy to feed and cloath the *Body* of my Child or Servant, the *Body* which within a few Days in despite of all my Care and Pains will resolve into a Clod of stupid Earth! and yet be altogether unconcerned what becomes of that *precious Soul*, which must be the Subject of an *everlasting* Happiness or Misery? Is it possible I should be so careful and sollicitous as I am, to heap up great *Fortunes* for my Children, that so they may swim in Plenty a few Moments, wear fine Cloaths, and fare deliciously every Day, and at last go down to the Worms with Pomp; and in the mean time neglect that *immortal Being* within them, which, when all the Wealth I provided for them is shrunk into Six Foot of Earth and a Winding-sheet, must be a *glorified* Spirit, or a *damned* Ghost! Sure did we but seriously consider, with what vast Capacities of Happiness or Misery, the *Souls* of Men are framed and constituted, and what proportionable Fates do attend them; we should be much more sollicitous than we are, not only to secure our *own Souls*, but also to make a timely Provision for the *Souls* of our *Children* and *Relations*.

II. Consider how much you are interested and concerned in the Fate of the *Souls* of *others*, but especially of your *Children* and *Servants*. For in this State of *Danger* wherein we are placed, God hath committed us to one another's Care, with a strict Injunction that we should *exhort one another daily, while it is called to Day, lest any of us be hardned through the deceitfulness of Sin*, Heb. iii. 13. And if when it is in our Power to *prevent* it, we suffer our Brother to be irrecoverably hardened in his Sin, we are *accountable* for it at the Tribunal of God, who will one Day severely charge us for this our cruel *Unfaithfulness* to our Brother, in suffering him to *miscarry* for ever, without admonishing him of his Danger, and endeavouring to *rescue* him from it by our *charitable Counsels* and *Perswasions*: So that if we suffer him to fall by *neglecting* to exhort and admonish him, in all probability he will not fall *alone*, but pull *us* down along with him into *Eternal Perdition*. Wherefore it concerns us for our *own* Sakes, so far as we have Opportunity, to discharge all *Offices* of *Mercy* towards the Souls of *others*; lest whilst they perish through *our Neglect*, we should be *involved* in their Ruin. But then as for our *Children* and *Servants*, their Souls are more immediately committed to our *Care* and *Conduct*, as being placed under our *Power* and *Disposal* by God's over-ruling Providence; which by bestowing them upon us, and placing them with us, doth in effect thus bespeak us; *These precious Souls I intrust in your Hands, to be educated and trained up to Eternal Happiness: See you give me a good Account of them; for if they perish through your Neglect, whenever I make Inquisition for Blood, I will certainly require it at your Hands.* How then shall we be able to lift up our Heads, when God shall demand of us, what are become of those *precious Jewels* which he committed to our Trust? If through our barbarous *Neglect* they should happen to be *lost* and *forfeited* to Eternal Misery; if through a *wretched regardlesness* of their Eternal Interest, we have not instructed and admonished them; if through a cruel *Fondness* and *Indulgence* we have not reproved and corrected them; or if by our wicked *Connivance* or *Example* we have encouraged and soothed them up in any destructive Course of Action; and so they should finally miscarry. Lord, what a *dreadful Account* shall we have to give, when we come to appear at thy Tribunal!

nal! Where the Blood of our *Children* and our *Servants* Souls ſhall joyn with our own *Perſonal Guilts*, to cry aloud for Vengeance againſt us. Wherefore if we have no Pity or Compaſſion for *them*, yet let us at leaſt be ſo merciful to *our ſelves*, as not to omit thoſe *Offices* of *Mercy*, which we are obliged to render to them.

III. Conſider what a mighty Influence your *Mercy* may have upon their *Welfare*. It is not to be imagined how many Souls might be ſaved from periſhing, were we but ſo *kind* and *merciful* as to diſtribute the *Bread* of *Life* to one another, according as we have Ability and Opportunity: How many a *dark* Mind might be *enlightned* by our ſound and pious *Inſtructions*? How many a *Head-ſtrong* Will might we *curb* and *reſtrain* by our prudent and ſeaſonable *Reproofs* and *Admonitions*? And how can we tell, but theſe our merciful Endeavours may, through the Concurrence of Divine *Grace*, prove bleſſed Means of their final *Recovery* and *Happineſs*? And if ſo what better *Office* can we do in the World; or what higher *Dignity* can we aſpire to, than to be the Saviours and Redeemers of *Souls*? And if by our *Inſtructions* and *Admonitions*, we might do ſo much Good in our common *Converſation* among Men; how much more might we do in our own *Families*? For our Children and Servants being under our *Power* and *Government*, will upon that Account receive our Admonitions with greater *Awe* and *Reverence*; and conſequently comply with them with greater *Eaſe* and *Readineſs*. And then we having the Conduct of their *young* and *tender* Years, in which their Minds and Manners may be eaſily *ſhaped* into any Form, it is in our Power to ſtamp upon them what Impreſſions we pleaſe: So that would we but now take Care to inſtruct their *Minds*, and regulate their *Wills* with wiſe and good *Principles* and *Admonitions*, we might eaſily impregnate their Natures with ſtrong Diſpoſitions to *Vertue* and *Religion*; and ſo by degrees cultivate thoſe Diſpoſitions into a State of *Grace*, and *habitual Goodneſs*. And when this bleſſed Effect is ſo much in our *Power*, what a *cruel Neglect* is it not to contribute towards it ſo far as we are able? Should you ſee a *Mother* deny a Morſel of Bread to her famiſh'd *Child*, when ſhe hath *enough* and to *ſpare*; or ſtrip it ſtark *naked* in a deep Winter's Froſt, and *expoſe* it on the Mountains to be ſtarved with *Cold*; would you not brand her for a *Monſter* of her Sex, and exclaim againſt her with the greateſt *Deteſtation* and *Abhorrence*? And yet, alaſs! that *unnatural Cruelty* which we ſhould ſo much abhor in another, we our Selves are too often guilty of in a much *higher* Degree. For by neglecting to *inſtruct* and *educate* our Families in Religion, we deny them the moſt *neceſſary* Thing in the World, even that which is the Food and Raiment of their *Souls*; without which they cannot *live*, but muſt neceſſarily *ſtarve* and *famiſh* for ever: and therefore by how much more precious their *Souls* are than their *Bodies*, and by how much more deplorable *eternal* Death is than *temporal*, by ſo much the more barbarous and inhumane are *thoſe* Parents who do not inſtitute their Children in *Religion*, than thoſe who ſuffer them to periſh with *Hunger* or *Cold*. For are you ſuch Infidels as to imagine, that they are born only for *this Life*, and that there is nothing beyond the Grave in which they are concerned? If not, what Account can you give of this your *unnatural* Neglect of them? If you think they muſt live for ever when they are gone out of this World, why then do not you take care that they may live in the other World, as well as in this? O improvident that we are! Can we be ſo much concerned that they may be happy for a *Moment*, and yet ſo indifferent whether they are happy or miſerable *for ever*? Are their *Souls* ſuch Trifles, or their *everlaſting* Fate ſuch an indifferent Matter, as that when it is ſo much in your Power, you think it not worth your while to concern your Selves ſo much about them? Wherefore in the Name of God, conſider with your Selves, what an infinite deal of *Good* you are capable of doing them by your pious *Inſtructions* and *Admonitions*; and what an unnatural *Barbarity* it would be to omit and neglect it.

CHAP.

Chap. II.

Of Mercy, *as it relieves the Miseries of the Body.*

I Shall now proceed to the second Sort of *Miseries, viz.* such as do affect Men's *Bodies*; under which I shall shew you what Acts of *Mercy* this kind of Miseries require of us. Now these as the former may be reduced to Five Heads:

First, *Natural Blemishes* and *Defects.*
Secondly, *Sicknesses* and *Diseases.*
Thirdly, *Outward Force* and *Violence* injuriously offered to them by those in whose Power they are.
Fourthly, *Civil* or arbitrary *Punishments* inflicted on them for Injuries received.
Fifthly, *Want* of outward *Necessaries.*

I. One of the *Miseries* which affects Mens *Bodies* is their natural *Blemishes* and *Defects*; such as Lameness or Crookedness, the Want of our Senses, or the Disproportion of our Parts, or Features; all which are real Infelicities, for as much as they render our *Bodies* either less *useful* to our selves, or less *graceful* and *amiable* to others. And indeed our *Body* being an Object of *Sense*, is usually much more remarked and taken notice of, than our *Soul* which is an *invisible* Being; and consequently the *Defects* and *Blemishes* of our *Bodies* lying more in view, are much more liable to be reflected on both by our selves and those we converse with, than the *Stains* and *Deformities* of our *Minds* and *Wills*; which being placed out of sight, are less exposed to Observation: Which is the Reason that our Corporeal *Defects* are so *grievous* to us, because being so apparent as they are both to our own and others Senses, they do not only upbraid us to our *Selves*, who being led by *Sense* or apt to value our selves by *sensible* Graces and Perfections; but are also prone to create a mean and contemptible Opinion of us in the Minds of *others*; the very Suspicion of which, if we are not *raised* above such *mean Considerations*, will be exceeding apt to grieve and afflict us. In this Case therefore the Law of *Mercy* requires us not to *contemn* or *undervalue* Men, not to *upbraid* or *reproach* them upon the account of any *bodily* Blemish or Defect; but to overlook these as inconsiderable Flaws of their *Case* and *Outside*, and render them all those Honours and Respects which the Graces and Vertues of their *Minds* deserve: Considering that the *Body* is not the Man, but the immortal *Mind* that inhabits it; and that many times the richest Diamonds wear the roughest Coats and Outsides; that those natural Blemishes are *Infelicities* which Men could not prevent, and which they cannot *rectifie*; that it is not in *their* Power to order *Nature* in their own Composure, but that what they had there, was such as they could neither *give* themselves, nor yet *refuse*, when it was bequeathed to them; and that therefore to deride and expose them for any Mishap or Blemish in their Composition, is to fling *Salt* into their Wounds, to *fret* and *inflame* their Misery. And yet alas! How common a Practice is this to sport with the Deformities of Men, as if *God* and *Nature* had designed them for so many Finger-buts of *Scorn* and *Derision*; to make them the Themes of our Jests and Laughter; which is a lamentable Instance of the foul Degeneracy of Human Nature, that can thus *play* upon Misery, and turn that which is an Object of *Pity* and *Compassion*, into a Triumph of *Mirth* and *Drollery*: for certainly how light and trifling soever it may appear through the common Practice of it, it is a Sign of *barbarous Ill-nature* for Men

to

to deride those Defects and Blemishes in another, which he is too prone to grieve at, but yet cannot help, as being his *Infelicities* and not his *Faults*.

II. Another of the *Miseries* which affect Mens Bodies is *Sickness* and *Diseases*; by which the Strength of our Nature is gradually exhausted, the Vigour of our Spirits wasted, the Activity of our Parts crampt and abated, and our *Bodies* are rendred through incessant Pains and Weakness not only *useless*, but *burthensom* to our *Souls*. In this case therefore the *Law* of *Mercy* requires of us to render to our sick Friends, Neighbours and Acquaintance all such good Offices as do any way conduce to their *Support*, *Refreshment*, or *Recovery*. As first, if their Sickness be such as will safely admit of *Discourse* and *Conversation*, we are obliged in Mercy to *visit* them, provided that our Company will be acceptable; and to endeavour by our Discourse to *chear* their drooping Spirits, to intermix their sorrowful Hours with the Pleasures of good *Conversation*, and to administer to their wearied Thoughts, the *Supports* and *Comforts* of Religion. For chearful and good *Discourse* is many times better than the richest *Cordial*, it makes the *Patient* to forget his Pain, or at least allays and mitigates his Sense of it; it diverts his Thoughts from their sorrowful Themes, and entertains them with brisk and sprightful *Idea's*, it raises the languishing Heart, and like *David*'s Musick, charms the Rage of those evil Spirits which infest it with their unnatural Hearts. So that by *visiting* our sick Friends, when they are willing to admit of our Conversation, and able to bear it, we many times prove their best *Physicians*, and administer to them the greatest *Relief* and *Ease*; and therefore if, when we might do them so much good by our Company, we needlesly *withdraw* or *absent* our selves from them, we are very much *wanting* in our *Charity* and *Mercy* towards them. But then as we are obliged in Mercy to *visit* them, when their Case will safely and conveniently admit of it; so we are also obliged by the same Mercy to render them all those necessary *Assistances*, which either their *Souls* or *Bodies* do require and need; to endeavour to awaken their Minds into *serious* Thoughts and Purposes, to advise them of their *Duty*, and to resolve their *Doubts*, to comfort and support them with the blessed *Hopes* of Religion, and to take all fair Opportunities to prepare their Souls for a happy *Death* and a glorious *Eternity*; that so whether they recover or no, this temporary Sickness of their *Bodies* may contribute to the eternal Health of their *Souls*: And then in order to their Recovery, we stand bound by the Laws of *Mercy* to contribute what we are able to their bodily *Ease* and *Refreshment*; to be ready to *serve* them in all their Necessities, and to *help* them when they cannot help themselves; to *compassionate* their Griefs, and *bear* with their Peevishnesses, and to the best of our knowledge to *direct* them to the ablest Physicians, or the most suitable Means; and if they are poor and indigent, to *supply* them with all such Remedies as are necessary to their Health and Recovery: And lastly, to be their earnest *Advocates* at the Throne of Grace, that the God of all Power and Goodness in whose Hands are the Issues of Life and Death, would commiserate their Sorrows and refresh their Weariness, and either *remove* their Sickness, or *Sanctifie* it to their eternal Health.

III. Another of the *Miseries* which affect Mens Bodies, is outward *Force*, and *Violence* from those in whose Power they are; such as *Captivity* and *Imprisonment*, *Persecutions* or cruel *Torments*? All which do importunately solicite the timely Succours of our *Mercy* and *Compassion*. For so for the *first* of them, *viz.* Bondage and Captivity, it is a sore and comprehensive Misery that commonly draws a long and heavy Chain of Calamities after it; for 'tis not only a *Deprivation* of our Liberty, which is one of the dearest of all our temporal Blessings, but also a *Confiscation* of it into the Hands and Disposal of our Enemies: And when our Persons are exposed to the Will and Tyranny of our Enemies, what can be expected from them in this degenerate State of Human Nature, but a cruel and barbarous Usage; to be worn out with Stripes and Hunger and intolerable Labour, and to be forced to pine away

our wretched Lives is unpitied Anguish and Vexation of Soul; especially if those whom we are enslaved to, happen to be Enemies to our Religion, as well as Country; which is the Case of those miserable *Captives* with whom our Mercy is most concerned; who being under the Power of those that are sworn Enemies to the Name of *Christ*, must upon that account expect to be treated with much more Rigour and Severity; there being no Enmity so *fierce* and *cruel*, as that which is back'd and set on by *Conscience*, and enraged with *Zeal* for *Religion*. And when Men are ill treated not only as they are *Slaves*, but as they are *Christians*, what a hazardous *Temptation* are they under to renounce their Christianity, and to exchange their Hopes of Heaven for their Liberty, and to enslave their *Souls* to ransom their *Bodies?* And when both their Souls and Bodies are thus exposed to Wretchedness and Misery, what woful Circumstances can render them more proper Objects of our Mercy? Wherefore in this Case we are obliged in *Mercy*, when any fair *Opportunity* is proposed to us, to *contribute* to their *Ransom* proportionably to our Ability; and so far as it is consistent with the publick Benefit, to *solicite* their Cause both with *God* and *Men*; to beseech *him* to support and preserve them, and to persuade all *those* with whom we have any Power or Interest, to a liberal Concurrence towards their *Relief*, and *Redemption*.

And then as for *Imprisonment*, which is a Sort of Captivity too; what a calamitous Condition is it for a Man to be shut up in a close and unwholsome Durance, to dwell with Hunger and Cold, and be confined to a hard Lodging, a dark Solitude, or a wretched Company; to be sequestred from the Conversation of his Friends, from the Comforts of Diversion, and from his Business and Employment, and all Opportunities of making Provision for his poor Family? All which *unhappy Circumstances* do commonly meet in the State and Condition of *Prisoners*, and render it exceedingly wretched and miserable. In which Case the Mercy which is required of us is, first to *visit* them in this their uncomfortable Solitude and Confinement, supposing that they are our Friends and Acquaintance; and to endeavour by our Conversation to *divert* their Sorrows, to *raise* and *strengthen* their Hopes, and to *chear* them with fresh Assurances of our Friendship; and then to use all just Endeavours to *mollifie* their *Adversaries*, to *vindicate* their Innocence, or to *Compound* their *Debts*, if they are not able to discharge them. But whether they are our Friends or Acquaintance, or no, the *Law* of *Mercy* obliges us, as we have Opportunity and Ability, to *relieve* their Necessities, to *redress* their Injuries, and if it be just and feasible, to *contribute* to their Enlargement, that so they may enjoy themselves with Comfort, and by their honest Industry make Provision for those who depend on them.

And then *lastly*, for bodily *Torments* and *Persecutions*, you need not be told what a *Misery* that is; for your own *Sense* will inform you, how dolorous it is to Flesh and Blood, to be cruelly scourged, beaten and abused; to be pinched with Hunger, harrassed with Labour, and dispirited for want of necessary Ease and Refreshment; and therefore as *Mercy* binds you by the strictest Obligations, not to *inflict* these Evils upon your *Children*, or *Servants*, or any others that are in your *Power* and *Disposal*; so it also engages you to endeavour the *Relief* of all such unhappy Persons, whom you know to be thus cruelly treated; to *intercede* in their behalf with those their hard-hearted Parents, Masters, or Conquerors, by whom they are thus unmercifully dealt with, to remonstrate to them their Cruelty and Inhumanity, and to endeavour, by such Arguments as are most likely to affect them, to *reduce* them to a more *merciful Temper* and *Treatment:* And if in despite of your Arguments they still persist in their Cruelty, to use all just and lawful ways to *curb* and *restrain* them, to *complain* of them to those who have power to correct them, and to *rescue* the miserable Wretches out of their Power and Disposal.

And then as for those who are unjustly *persecuted* for their *Conscience* and *Religion*, who to secure their *Souls*, and their Loyalty to *God* and their *Saviour*,

 are

are forced to fly from their Habitations and Countries, or to submit themselves, to Spoil and Depredation, to Imprisonment and Famine, Torture and Death; *these* doubtless are of all others the *greatest Objects* of our Mercy, because *they* suffer for our *common Master* and in our *common Cause*, which ought to be dearer to us than our own Lives; because our *Religion* suffers with them, and what *they* suffer we must suffer (unless we will renounce our Religion) if ever we are reduced to their Circumstances. And can we with *unconcerned* Hearts behold our persecuted *Brethren*, flying into our Arms for Succour before the mighty *Nimrods* of the Earth, with their *Souls*, their *Consciences*, and their *Religion* in their Hands; and with pitiful Looks beseeching us to deliver them from the *dreadful Dilemma* they are put to, of delivering up their *Souls* or *Bodies* for a Prey; without Agonies of *Pity* and *Compassion*? And if we have any *Mercy* or *Compassion* for them, by what more suitable Acts can we express it, than by a *kind* and *welcome Reception* of those who fly to us for Succour, and a *free* and *liberal Contribution* towards their Relief and Substance; and by assisting those with the Charity of our *Prayers*, whom we cannot reach with the Charity of our *Alms*; or as the Apostle expresses it, by *remembring those that are in Bonds*, that is, so as to pity them and pray for them, and if it were in our Power, so as to visit and Comfort and relieve them, *as being bound with* them, and also with the same effect to remember those that *suffer Adversity as being our selves also in the Body*. Heb. xiii. 3.

IV. Another of the Miseries which affect Men's Bodies is *Civil* or *Arbitrary* Punishments inflicted on them for Injuries received. For all considerable Injuries do give us a right to *punish* the Offender, either by a due Course of *Law*, or else immediately by our own *Power* and *Authority*. If by Nature or Compact the Offender be put under our *Power* and *Disposal*, his Offence gives us a Right to *correct* him by our own Authority; if *not*, his Offence gives us Right to *appeal* to the publick Tribunals, and there to exact of him such Penalties as the *Law* denounces in the case. Now because Mens *Souls* are out of the reach of all human Punishments, and liable only to the Lash of the *Father* of *Spirits*; therefore we can exact no other Penalties of Offenders, but only such as do affect their *Bodies* with Shame, or Pain, with Loss of bodily *Goods*, or wearisome *Labour*, or Confinement of *Liberty*; all which being miseries to the *Body*, are proper Objects of our *Compassion* and *Mercy*. And what *Mercy* these Miseries require, may be easily collected from the natural *End* of *Punishment*, which is not so much to *offend* the Guilty, as to *defend* the Innocent, not so much to *hurt* or *damnifie* the Offender, as to *restrain* him from hurting himself, or others; and to *warn* others, by the Example of his *Punishment*, not to imitate the Example of his *Offence*. So that according to its true and natural *Design*, Punishment is rather an Act of *Mercy*, than an Act of *Revenge*; the *End* of it being to do *Good*, and not to retaliate *Evil*; to defend my *self*, or *others* against the Offenders, or else to defend the *Offenders* against themselves, or to defend others against the prevailing Infection of their lewd and pernicious *Examples*: and whosoever punishes to vent and ease his *Spleen*, or gratifie his *Malice* with the Hurt and Mischief of the Offender; transgresses the *End* of Punishment, and under Pretence of *Justice* sacrifices to his own *Cruelty*. No Man hath Right to do another *Hurt*, unless it be necessary to some good *End*; for to hurt without *any* Reason is a brutish *Savageness*, and to hurt without a *good* Reason devilish *Rancour*: He therefore who hurts another *meerly* to hurt him, acts with the Intention of a *Devil*, who doth mischief for mischiefs sake, and plagues his wretched Vassals meerely to recreate himself with their Miseries, and pacifie his own black Rage and Malice, Since therefore the *End* of Punishment is doing *good*, it ought to be executed with a good *Will*, and a kind and benevolent *Intention*; not to discharge or *rage*, or tickle and recreate our *Malice*, but either to *vindicate* our own Right, or to *reclaim* the Offender, or to *terrifie* others from his Sin by his *Sufferings*. This therefore is the *first* Thing which the *Law* of *Mercy* requires of us, in respect to our punishing Offenders, that we should always

always do it with a good and benevolent *Intention.* But then,

II. It alſo requires us not to exact Puniſhment for *ſmall* and *trifling* Offences: for ſince the *End* of Puniſhment is doing *good*, it is Cruelty to exact it for *ſlight* and *inconſiderable* Evils: becauſe in this Caſe the *Puniſhment* is a greater Hurt than the *Offence.* And what Reaſon can I have to hurt another for ſuch *ſmall* Offences, as do little or no hurt either to my ſelf or others, but only to gratifie my own *Revenge* and *Malice?* As for Inſtance, ſuppoſe that in a Heat of Paſſion a Man ſhould give me the *Lye*, or call me by an *ill Name*, or treat me with *reproachful Language*; and thereupon I ſhould ſtrike or wound him, or proſecute him with a vexatious Suit at Law: In this Caſe it is plain, my *Puniſhment* would hurt him more than his *Offence* could hurt me, and conſequently my *Deſign* in puniſhing him would be to do *Hurt* and not *Good*; and to deſign to do Hurt is *Malice* and *Cruelty.* Wherefore in Caſe of *lighter* Injuries, the Law of Mercy requires us wholly to *remit* and *forgive* them: and not rigidly to exact the Hurt of the Offender for ſuch trifling Offences, as do no *great Hurt* either to our Selves, or others.

III. The *Law* of *Mercy* alſo obliges us not to puniſh an Offender, when we can do *no Good* by it either to our *Selves*, or to *him*, or to *others*; for in this Caſe to puniſh can ſerve no other End, but to *fulfil* the Luſt of our *Revenge* and *Malice.* As for Inſtance, ſuppoſe I have a poor *Inſolvent Debtor*, that owes me a great deal and can pay me nothing; and it were in my Power, not only to caſt him into Priſon, but to force him to languiſh away his wretched Life, to what *End* ſhould I inflict this Puniſhment upon him? I cannot hope to *recover my own* by it, for a *Priſon*, we ſay, *will pay no Debts*; and where nothing is, nothing can be expected: I cannot deſign to *reform him* by it, ſince Priſons are commonly the moſt fruitful Nurſeries of Wickedneſs: I cannot aim to *warn others* by it, for what Warning can oblige Men to do that which is impoſſible? What *End* can I propoſe then, but only the humouring of a wrathful Mind, and to glut it with *Revenge* and *Miſchief?* and if this be the Point I drive at, I run from all the Rules of *Mercy.*

IV. The *Law* of *Mercy* alſo obliges me *not* to puniſh an Offender, ſo long as the *End* of puniſhing him is fairly attainable by *gentler Means.* For if when I can obtain my End of an Offender by *Perſuaſion* and *Forbearance*, I rather chuſe to extort it from him by *Puniſhment*; it is plain that I have a *cruel Intention* towards him, and do affect to hurt and miſchief him; for when I may obtain my End of him, by *Forbearance* or *gentle Perſuaſions*, why ſhould I chuſe to force it from him by *Rigour* and *Severity*; but that I am either inſenſible of his Hurt, or elſe do take Pleaſure to afflict and grieve him? Wherefore in all ſuch Puniſhments as are within our Power, the *Law* of *Mercy* obliges us, firſt to try *ſofter* and *gentler* Ways, and make a long and thorough Experiment of the Methods of *Kindneſs*, *Perſuaſion* and *Forbearance*; and if by theſe we can obtain our End and conquer the Offender, and vindicate our own Right, to *remit* our Right of puniſhing him, and *forbear* all Rigour and Severity. For Puniſhment is our *laſt* Remedy; and ought never to be applied to Offenders, till gentler Means have been tried, and defeated.

V. The *Law* of *Mercy* alſo obliges us to inflict *no more* Puniſhment on Offenders, than what is abſolutely *neceſſary* to the obtaining thoſe good *Ends* we deſign by it. For he who puniſhes and Offender more than is *needful* to the natural End of Puniſhment, can deſign no other End by it but what is *cruel* and *barbarous:* and whatſoever is more than *needful* either to the *Vindicating* our own Right, or the *Reforming* the Offender, or the giving fair *Warning* to others, ſerves to no other Purpoſe but to gratifie our own *Revenge* and *Fury.* So far as Puniſhment is needful to theſe good *Ends*, it is not only *lawful*, but *good:* but all *beyond* what is needful to theſe, is perfect *Savageneſs* and *Cruelty.* When therefore for the obtaining theſe Ends, we are neceſſitated to puniſh an Offender, the *Law* of *Mercy* obliges us firſt to try *lighter* and *gentler* Puniſhments; and if by theſe we cannot obtain our End, to proceed in

our Severities by *Degrees*, and not to fly to extreme Rigour, till we have found all *gentler* Corrections *ineffectual.* For if a *lighter* Punishment will do the Work, it is Cruelty to lay on a *heavier:* and whether it will or no, is no otherwise to be known than by *Tryal.*

Sixthly and Lastly, the *Law* of *Mercy* also requires us, always to punish *short* of the Offence, *i. e.* where the Punishment is in your *Power*, and you are not determined by a *legal Necessity* to use the utmost Extremity. For where you are *legally* obliged either to judge, or prosecute an Offender, there you are to proceed by the Measures of the *Law* which obliges you, and which usually determines you to the *kind*, and *degrees* of the Punishment to be inflicted: but where the Matter is wholly in your *Power*, either to remit of, or augment the Punishment, there the *Law* of *Mercy* obliges you not to exact the *utmost.* For if you punish more than the Offence deserves, you are *unjust* and *tyrannical*; because as your Right to punish accrues from the Offence that is done to you, so your Right to punish to such a Degree accrues from the Degree of the Offence; which you cannot *exceed* without exceeding your *Right*, and exacting *more* Punishment of the Offender than he *owes* you. So that every Degree of Punishment which *exceeds* the demerit of the Fault, is *lawless* and *licentious* Violence, to which we can pretend no Right, and by which we do an injurious *Outrage* to the Offender. And as when our Punishment *exceeds* the Offence, we punish without *Justice*; so when it equals the Offence, we punish without *Mercy.* For the *utmost* Degree of just Severity admits no Intermixture of *Mercy*; the Office of which is to relieve the Miserable, and consequently to relieve them, when they have injured and offended us, of some part of the Evils and Miseries they deserve. Wherefore as he is an unmerciful *Creditor*, who rather than abate the least part of his Due, will strip his poor Debtor to the Skin, and reduce him to the utmost Pinch and Extremity of Need: so he is an unmerciful *Punisher*, that exacts to the full Demerit of the Fault, and stretches his Right of punishing to the utmost extent, to make the Offender miserable. In this Case therefore the *Law* of *Mercy* requires us to follow the great Example of *God*, who in the midst of *Justice* doth always remember *Mercy*; who makes *large Abatements* of his Right to punish us, and never exacts of us the utmost Plagues and Sufferings which our Iniquities *deserve.* Conformably to which excellent Pattern, we are obliged in punishing others to intermingle *Mercy* with our *Severities*; and proportionably to the Offender's Penitence, or the pitiable Circumstances of his Fault, or the Misery and Necessities of his present Condition, to make an equitable *Abatement*, and *Defalcation* of his Punishment. And thus you see what that Mercy is which is required of us with respect to our *punishing* of others.

Fifthly and Lastly, Another of the Miseries which affect Men's *Bodies*, is want of the outward *Necessaries* of this present Life, such as *Meat* and *Drink*, *Lodging* and *Apparel*; the Want of which cannot but render our Life exceeding wretched and miserable. For what an insupportable Grievance is it to our Nature, to be pinched with an impatient Hunger, or suffocated with a burning Drought; to be forced to prey upon it self for want of other Fewel, or to appease its furious Appetites with loathsome, heartless or unwholsom Sustenance; to see a hungry Family crying about us for want of Bread, and have little or none to give them; to behold our Children shivering with Cold, and drooping with Famine, and not be able to succour and relieve them; whilst our pined and miserable Carkasses are either covered with loathsom Rags, or nakedly exposed to the Injuries of the Weather, and more destitute and unprovided than the Foxes and Birds, for want of a Hole, or Nest where to lay their Heads? These are Circumstances *miserable* euough to move a Heart of Stone to *Pity* and *Compassion:* In this Case therefore we are obliged by the *Law* of *Mercy*,

Mercy, first, to a tender *Sympathy* and *Commiseration*; to affect our Souls with a soft and compassionate Sense of the Wants of our poor Brethren, to put our *Selves* in *their* Case, and represent *their* Condition to *our own* Hearts and Affections, as if it were *our own*; and thereby to endeavour and excite in our selves a proportionable *Feeling* of their Calamity and Misery. And to this we are universally obliged, whether we are high or low, rich or poor, whether we are in Circumstances to relieve the Needs of others, or to need Relief for our selves; for so the Precept runs universally, *Finally be all of one Mind, having Compassion one of another, Love as Brethren, be pitiful, be courteous*, 1 Pet. iii. 8. And as we are universally obliged to *compassionate* those that are in Need, so we are also bound, according as we have Opportunity and Ability, to *succour* and relieve them. Indeed, if we are poor and needy, we are by no Means obliged to pinch our *selves* or our *Families*, to relieve the Necessities of *others*; for the Desire of *Self-Preservation* being of all others the most vehement Passion which God hath implanted in our Natures; he doth thereby not only *warrant* but *direct* us to take Care of our *selves* in the first place, and not to sacrifice the Means of our *own* Preservation to the Needs and Necessities of *others*. And then our nearest *Relatives* being next to our *selves*, we are obliged in the next place to relieve *them*, and consequently in all *Competitions* for our Relief and Mercy, to prefer the Wants and Necessities of *our own* Families. But though *we* may not be *able*, without wronging our Families, to give Alms to our Necessitous Brother; yet if by representing his Necessities to *others* who are better able to relieve him, if by *solliciting* his Cause and *begging* Relief for him, for which he perhaps is asham'd to do for himself, we can any way contribute to his *Succour* and *Support*, we stand strictly obliged to it by the *Laws* of *Mercy*; and this, if we can do no more, will be as acceptable to God as the most liberal Alms. For where the *Deed* is impossible, God always accepts the *Will* for it, and reckons all these good Works *in* our Account, which he knows we would do, if we were able. But when he hath furnished us with *Means*, as well as *Opportunities*, to relieve the Necessitous, he expects the *Deed*, as well as the *Will*, from us; knowing that we cannot *sincerely will* the *Deed*, if when it is in our Power, we do not *effect* it. Hence is that of the *Heb* xiii. 16. *To do good and to communicate, forget not, for with such Sacrifice God is well pleased.* And accordingly the Apostle bids *Timothy*, 1 *Tim.* vi. 17, 18. *To charge them that are rich*, i. e. whose Enjoyments do exceed their Necessities, *that they do Good, that they be Rich in good Works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.* And how necessary the Deed is to the *Sincerity* of the Will, when it is in our Power, that Passage of St. *John* doth fully evidence, 1 Eph. iii. 17. *But whoso hath this Worlds Good and seeth his Brother have Need, and shutteth up his Bowels of Compassion from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in him?* This therefore is an Act of *Mercy* indispensably due from us to those who are in Necessity, to contribute according to our Ability towards their Relief and Support; and accordingly, *Alms*, which signifies a Gift to one that is in Need, comes from the *Greek* Word ἐλεημοσύνη, and that from ἔλεος, which signifies *Mercy*; which plainly denotes it to be one of the greatest and most principal Acts of *Mercy* that we owe to the *Miserable*.

CHAP.

Chap. III.

Of Almsgiving, *as to the Manner of performing it; and some Motives thereunto.*

WE have seen that *Almsgiving* is one of the Principal Acts of *Mercy*; and it being so, I shall more largely insist upon it, and endeavour to shew,

First, The Manner in which it ought to be performed: And
Secondly, To *press* the Performance of it by some *Considerations*.

I. The Manner in which this Duty of *Almsgiving* ought to be performed; and that in those following Particulars:

First, It ought to be performed with a good and merciful Intention.
Secondly, Justly and Righteously.
Thirdly, Readily and Chearfully.
Fourthly, Liberally and Bountifully.
Fifthly, Timely and Seasonably.
Sixthly, Discreetly and Prudently.

I. This Duty of *Almsgiving* ought to be performed with a *good* and *merciful* Intention, not merely to court the Applauses and Commendations of Men, to bring our Names in Vogue, or to serve our secular Designs; but chiefly and principally to express our *Gratitude* and *Duty* to God, and *Confidence* in Him; who hath not only filled our Cup, but crowned it with an over-flowing Plenty, thereby enabling us to relieve others, and thereby constituting us *Trustees* for the Poor and Needy, with a strict and inviolable Charge to give them their Food in due Season; to which he hath annexed a *Bill* of *Credit* under his own *Broad Seal*, to repay us the *Principal* of our Alms with a Thousand-fold *Interest:* With Respect therefore to these mighty *Reasons*, and out of a tender *Commiseration* to our poor Brethren, we ought to perform our Alms; that so like Curls of *holy Incense* they may ascend to Heaven, and breath a *sweet smelling* Savour into the Nostrils of God, for 'tis by *this* alone that they are consecrated into an *acceptable Sacrifice* to him, and rendered *true Piety* and *Devotion*; whereas if we give our Alms merely, or mainly to be *seen of Men*, or to serve a worldly Interest, they proceed not from *Mercy* but *Self-Love*. And since all Acts that are *materially* good, do receive their *Form* and *Denomination* from the *Intention*; such Pharisaical Alms can be denominated neither *Pieties*, nor *Mercies*, but are a sordid Traffick for *Applause* and *Interest*; and hence our Saviour cautions us, *Take heed that ye do not your Alms before Men, to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no Reward of your Father which is in Heaven: Therefore when thou dost thine Alms, do not sound a Trumpet before thee, as the Hypocrites do in the Synagogues, and in the Streets, that they may have Glory of Men; Verily I say unto you, they have their Reward,* Matth. vi. 1, 2.

II. This Duty of Almsgiving ought to be performed with *Justice* and *Righteousness*, that is, we ought not to give that in Alms which is none of *our own*, supposing it hath a rightful Owner, to whom we can make a Restitution of it. For what we have *wrongfully* got, is none of *ours*, but *his* whom we have *wrongfully deprived* of it; and to him we are bound in Conscience to restore it, in Case he be living, and we know where to find him; if not, to his lawful Heirs, or Assigns: But if either the Party be dead

dead whom we have wrong'd of it, or we cannot find him, or any Heir of his, that can lawfully claim it; it is not only *lawful*, but necessary for us to bestow it upon the *Poor* and *Needy*. For where there is no visible Owner, the Property reverts immediately into the Hands of the *Supreme Lord* of the World; who hath settled it as a Pension on the *Poor*, to eek out the narrow Provsions which his Providence hath made for them. But to give Alms out of those *unlawful Gains*, which we are obliged in Justice to restore to the rightful Owners, is to make our selves the *Thieves*, and the Poor the *Receivers* For to do Alms, is to give away something of *our own* to remedy another's Want or Misery; and therefore to give away one Man's Right, to supply another's Necessity, is not so much an *Alms*, as a *Robbery*. By this Rule therefore Debtors that owe more than they can pay, are obliged in Conscience not to intrench upon their *Justice* by their *Mercy*; nor to disable themselves from being *just* to their Creditors, by being *merciful* to the Poor. For though to relieve the Poor be *nakedly*, and *abstractedly* good yet it is to be considered, that particular Actions are good, or bad, according as the *Circumstances* are, which adhere to them: And when that Action which is *nakedly good*, happens tobe cloathed with an *evil Circumstance*, it is *so far* evil and unlawful. And therefore when my *relieving* the Poor is accompanied with this *evil Circumstance*, of *defrauding* my Creditors of their Due, I am so far bound in Conscience not to relieve them; because if I do, I must relieve them *unjustly:* This therefore we are especially to take Care of, that our Alms be *just* and *righteous*.

III. This Duty of Almsgiving ought to be performed *readily* and *chearfully*. For this is the Apostle's own Direction. *Every Man according as he purposeth in his Heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of Necessity; for God loveth a chearful Giver*, 2 Cor. ix. 7. And indeed if we give Alms out of a Principle of *Mercy* and *Compassion*, it is impossible but we must do it *chearfully*; because by Compassion we make *others* Miseries our *own*, and so by relieving them, we relieve our selves, and are *Partakers* with them in the Comfort of those Reliefs we afford them. For when I see a Man struggling with Want, and groaning under a sharp Necessity, if I relieve him, I *ease* and *refresh* my own yearning Bowels; and the Human Nature within me, which is common to us both, doth by a kind of *sympathetick Motion*, exalt and raise up it self, and swells with a *generous* Pleasure. So that if *Mercy* be the Spring of my Alms, they will flow with a *free* and *chearful* Current, because all the while I am watering *others*, I shall feel the *Refreshment* of my own Streams. When therefore we bestow our Alms with a *grudging* and *unwilling* Mind, 'tis plain that it is not *Mercy*, but *Shame*, or *Fear*; or *Importunity* that moves us, and if so, there is no *Virtue* in them, nor can we expect that any *Reward* should attend them. For to contribute towards another's Relief, because we are *ashamed*, or afraid to do otherwise, is rather paying a *Tax*, than giving an *Alms*, and when nothing can be wrung out of me, but what is distrained by *Importunity*, I give not for the *Poor*'s Relief, but for *my own* Peace and Quiet: And what *Virtue* is it for a Man to give, only to get rid of a *Dun*, and ease himself of a troublesome *Importunity?* Wherefore to render our Alms *virtuous*, and *rewardable*; it is necessary that they should be performed with a *free* and *chearful* Heart; that they should flow, like Water from a Spring, in *natural* and *unforced* Streams, and not be pump'd from us with Shame, or Importunity.

IV. This Duty of *Almsgiving* ought to be performed *liberally*, and *bountifully*; according to the Proportion of our Estate and Abilities. For the *Design* of those *Alms* which are the Fruits of Mercy, is to *redress* the poor Man's Misery, to *satisfie* his hungry Bowels, and *rescue* him from the pinching Necessities under which he groans and languishes: And this being the *Design* of *Mercy*, it measures its Alms accordingly, and *proportions* them to the craving Necessities it supplies. And its Aim being not only to rescue

the Miserable from *extreme* Misery, but also according to its Power, to render them *Happy*; it doth not think it sufficient to rescue the Necessitous from *extreme* Want and Famine, but doth also covet to render their Lives *Happy*, and give them a *comfortable* Enjoyment of themselves. For merely to keep a Man from *famishing*, looks rather like a Design to *prolong* his Torment, and *spin out* the Duration of his Misery, than to contribute to his *Ease* and *Happiness*; and if we design his *Happiness*, as we must do if we design *mercifully*, we shall endeavour not only to enable him to *live*, but to live *comfortably*, and accordingly *proportion* our Alms. 'Tis true, the *Liberality* of our Alms is to be measured, not according to the *Quantity* of them, but according to the *Proportion* they bear to our *Power* and *Ability*; and though I should give five times less than one who hath ten times my Estate, yet I should be as liberal as he, according to the *Proportion* of my Ability: And accordingly the indigent Widow's *two Mites* are pronounced by our *Saviour* a more liberal Alms, than the much more which those which were rich cast into the Treasury, Mark xii. 42, 43, 44. *Because they cast in of their Abundance, but she of her Want.* And therefore though (as I shall shew by and by) it is impossible to determine the *Measures* of Alms, which we are obliged to, because the particular *Measure* of our *Ability* is so various; yet this to be sure the *Law* of *Mercy* exacts, that in Proportion to our Estates and Circumstances, they should be *liberal* and *bountiful*. For he who gives in such slender Proportions as bring little or no Relief to the Receiver, acts as if he design'd rather to *mock* him, than to *supply* his Necessities; or as if he intended rather to keep him alive for a Prey to a *long* and *lingering* Misery, than to render his Life *happy* and *comfortable*.

V. This Duty of *Almsgiving* ought to be perform'd *timely* and *seasonably*, i. e. in the Nick of *Opportunity*, when the poor Man's Necessities call loudest for it, and our Relief and Succour may be most *beneficial* to him. To such Poor indeed as do always want, our Alms can never be *unseasonable*, because their Necessities do always call for them: But there are some particular *Seasons* when their Wants call *louder*, as in Times of Sickness; or Scarceness of Work; or Dearness of Provisions; or in the Beginning of Arrests, before the Prison hath devoured them; or after a great Loss, when their Fortunes are sinking, and a small Support may keep their Heads above Water; or in a Word, when they are young and capable of Work, or Instruction, and their Parents are not able to dispose of them, when the placing them out to some honest Calling may prevent their turning Thieves or Beggars, and render them useful to the World; or when they are setting up their Trades with an insufficient Stock, and a little Help may encourage their Diligence, and advance them to a comfortable Livelihood. *These* and *such* like are the *proper Seasons* of Almsgiving; in which by tendring our helping Hand, we may rescue many a poor Wretch out of a deep Abyss of *Misery*, and render their future Condition *happy* and *prosperous*. Wherefore the *Law* of *Mercy* obliges us, not only to bestow our Alms, but to bestow them at such *Times* and *Seasons* wherein they are most needed, and may do the *greatest Good*; that we should not reserve them to our last Will and Testament, like Medlars that are never good till they are rotten; but embrace all Opportunities, while we are living, to give *timely Reliefs* to the Necessitous. For he who *defers* his Alms, when such *proper Seasons* are presented, is *so far* the Cause of all the consequent Calamities which the Poor do suffer by the Want of them: And since the *Design* of Mens Alms is to *relieve* the Sufferings of the Poor, 'tis doubtless a Degree of Cruelty to *prolong* their Sufferings, by needlesly *delaying* to relieve them. You would think her a *cruel* Mother, that having Bread enough and to spare, should rather chuse to afflict her Child with a long, unsatisfied Hunger, than to content its craving Appetite, by giving it its Food in due *Season*: And sure 'tis a great Defect of *Compassion* unnecessarily to *prolong* the Sufferings of our indigent Brother, though

though it be but for a Day or an Hour, when we have a present *Opportunity* to relieve him: And since whatsoever Relief we do design him, he must necessarily *lose* so much of it as the Time of our *Delay* amounts to; Mercy obliges us to relieve him *quickly*, and not to suffer him to *pine* away, whilst our Charity is growing.

Sixthly and *lastly*, This Duty of *Almsgiving* ought to be performed *discreetly* and *prudently*: For thus the Psalmist tells us, *Psal.* cxii. 5. *A good Man sheweth favour and lendeth, and will guide his Affairs with Discretion.* And indeed unless *Prudence* be the Dispenser of our Alms, *Mercy* will miss of what it aims at and designs by them; which is to do good to the Poor, to supply their craving Necessities, and give them a comfortable Enjoyment of themselves: Instead of which, if we do not manage our Charities with *Prudence*, we shall many times *create* Necessities by *supplying* them, and *increase* and *multiply* the Miseries of the World by an *unskilful* Endeavour to *redress* them For it is with Alms, as it is with Estates, where half of the Riches doth consist in the *Discretion* of the Owner; and those very Charities, which being distributed by a *blind* Superstition, or a *foolish* Pity, do many times do more *Hurt* than *Good*; might have been improved into a plentiful Provision for the Necessities of the World, had they been *wisely* ordered and disposed. But what Harvest can the World reap from this precious Seed of our Alms, when they are sown with a *careless*, or *unskilful* Hand? When they are either thrown on a Heap to *useless* or *superstitious* Purposes, or scattered at all Adventures without any Distinction of the cultivated from the fallow Ground; so that the Birds of Preys, the useless *Vagrants*, *Drones* and *Beggars* devour and eat them up, whilst the *Modest*, *Impotent* and *Laborious* Poor are utterly destitute and unprovided? Since therefore the Design of Mercy is to do *Good* with its Alms, to comfort and relieve the Poor, and supply their pinching Necessities; it is doubtless very necessary in order to this End, that it should be conducted by *Prudence* and *Discretion*; which ought more particularly to guide and direct our Alms; *First*, in the Method of *Provision* of them. *Secondly*, In the Choice of the *Objects* of them. *Thirdly*, In the *Nature* and *Quality* of them. *Fourthly*, As to the *Proportions* of them. *Fifthly*, In the *Manner* of bestowing them.

I. We ought to exercise our *Prudence* as to the Method of *providing* our Alms. For herein *Prudence* will direct us, not only to be *Frugal* in our Expences, to pare off our Superfluities, and to be *diligent* and *industrious* in our Callings, that we may have to give them that need; but also out of our Incomes and Profits to *consecrate* a considerable Proportion to *pious* and *charitable* Uses. And herein the Apostle gives us an excellent Rule, 1 *Cor.* xvi. 2. *Upon the first Day of the Week let every one of you lay by him in Store as God hath prospered him, that there be no Gatherings when I come:* which though it doth not carry with it a *necessary* and *indispensable* Obligation, it being impossible for many Men to take a weekly Account how God hath prospered them, and to lay by accordingly; yet thus far at least it is a very *wise Direction* to us, that as oft as we cast up our Accounts, whether it be *weekly*, *monthly*, or *annually*, we should in *Proportion* to our Increase devote some convenient Share of it, as a private Bank or Treasury for *charitable* Uses; that so we may not be to seek for Alms upon *sudden* and *emergent* Occasions, but may have a Store *ready* by us, to supply our daily Expence and Distribution. And if we take care not to alienate, or imbezzle what we have thus devoted to our private *Corban*, we shall always give with Chearfulness, having by us a *Stock* designed to no other End but that of *Charity*.

II. We ought also to exercise our *Prudence* in the Choice of the *Objects* of our Charity, so as to take care that they be such as do *truly* need and deserve it. For unless we do so, we shall many times encourage *Vice*, instead

 of

of relieving *Poverty*; and be tempted by the *clamorous Importunities* of idle and vicious Persons, to *prostitute* our Alms to their Sloth and Intemperance. For how often do we see the *imprudent Charities* of well disposed Minds poured into those Sinks of Filthiness; and like the Sacrifices of *Bel*, devoted to the importunate Lusts of a Company of idle *Drones* and *Beggars*; that are not so properly the Members, as the Wens of the Body Politick, as being utterly *useless* to all its natural Ends, and only serving to deform and bring Diseases upon it, and to draw away the Nourishment of it from its useful Parts and Members? Now what a Shame and Pity is it, that these precious Fruits of *Mercy* should be thus abused and misemployed, to pamper a Company of devouring *Vermin*, whose Business it is to croak about the Streets, and wander from Door to Door; whilst many a *poor industrious* Family, that hath more Mouths to feed than Hands to work, lies drooping under its Wants and Necessities? Wherefore though the former are not to be altogether *neglected*, when their Needs are real and urgent; yet certainly *Prudence* will direct our Charity to such Persons, as have either *fallen* from Riches to Poverty, and consequently are less able to toil and drudge for Bread, or else to such as are either *worn out* by Labour, or *disabled* from it by Sickness, or *oppressed* with such a numerous Charge of Children, as do exceed their utmost Industry to maintain. In such *good Grounds* as these, *Prudence* will advise us to sow the main of our Charities, and not to throw it away with a careless Hand upon the *barren Rocks* and *Highways*, to be devoured by Vermin, and Birds of Prey.

III. We ought to exercise our *Prudence*, in determining the *Nature* and *Quality* of our Alms. And herein *Prudence* will direct us, to prefer those Alms which may serve a poor Man for a *constant* Provision, and put him in a *fixed* Way of Living, before those which are *transient*, and do only help in a *Pang* of Need; which do just hold him up from perishing for an Hour, but do not take him out of the *deep Waters*. Wherefore if the Person, to whom we design a Relief, be fit and able to *work*, or hath been bred up in any honest *Occupation*, 'tis a much *wiser* Charity, to provide him an *Employment*, or to contribute towards the Setting him up in his *Trade*, than barely to relieve his *present* Necessity; because by this means we relieve him both for the *present* and the *future*, and convert our Alms into a *standing* Maintenance. Upon which Account 'tis doubtless a very *prudent* Charity to contribute to the Erection and Maintenance of Publick *Work-houses* for the Poor, where they and their Children may be provided with such Work as they are capable of; and thereby be inured to *Industry*, and enabled to support *themselves*. And as *prudent* Charity prefers such Alms as do draw after them a *lasting* Effect and Benefit, before such as do only supply a *transient* Necessity; so it also chuses, if it be consistent with Convenience, to give its Alms in *kind*, rather than in *Value*, to give Cloaths to the Naked, and Food to the Hungry, Physick to the Sick, and Books to the Uninstructed: for though Money indeed will answer all these Needs, yet we are not sure it will be always laid out upon them.

IV. We ought to exercise our *Prudence* also in stating the *Proportions* of our Charity; that is, what Proportion of our Income, or Increase we ought to *devote* to charitable Uses, and in what Proportion we ought to *distribute*. For as for the first of these, when all is done, every Man must be his own *Casuist*. The *Jews* indeed had a Proportion fix'd and stated to their Hands; for there was a double Tithing prescribed to them by the Law of *Moses*, *viz.* the every Year's Tithing, which was an annual tenth Part of their Increase, for the Maintenance of their *Priests* and *Sacred Officers*; and then there was a third Year's Tithing, which amounted to the thir-

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tieth Part of their Increase, and that was devoted for the Supply and Maintenance of the *Poor:* And if such a Proportion were required of the *Jews*, we may be sure a greater is required of *us*, whose Righteousness must *exceed* the Righteousness of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, if ever we mean to enter into the Kingdom of God. But since *God* hath not determined the exact Proportions of our Charity, it is impossible for *us* to do it, where there are such *different* Circumstances and Abilities in this Matter; therefore we must leave Men, who best understand their own Condition, to the Guidance of their own *Conscience* and *Discretion*; who are in the first Place to consider what is requisite to support them in the Condition of their Birth, their Place, or Office, or Family, and to the Discharge of their several Obligations. For *Prudence* doth not require of all the same Proportions of Charity; some may afford a *twentieth*, others a *thirtieth*, and to others whose Children and Dependants are numerous, or whose Fortunes are clogged and entangled, the *hundredth* Part may be over-measure. Wherefore according as the Heap is, the *wise* Man is to sow and distribute: substracting not only what will support his *Life*, but also what will maintain the *Decency* of his Estate and Person; and that not only as to *present* Needs, but also as to *future* Necessities, and very probable Contingencies. But yet in the Stating of this Matter, it is doubtless much safer to *exceed*, than to fall *short* of our due Proportions; for as for *exceeding*, we have many holy Persons for our *Precedents*, we have *Christ* himself for our Voucher in the fore-named Case of the *Poor Widow*, and a vast Treasure in *Heaven* for our Reward. Wherefore in the Determination of this Case, *Christian Prudence* will direct us not to be too nice and curious, too fond and partial to *our Selves*, in stretching our Needs and Conveniences beyond their *just* Dimensions; but to take easie and moderate Measures of them, and to spare what may be *decently spared* from superfluous Servants, idle Meetings, unnecessary Feasts, and chargeable Garments, and Diversions; and if we thus pare off our *needless* Expence, and lay aside the *Surplusage* for Charity, the Consequence will be this; the *Poor* will be more plentifully *relieved*, and our *Selves* will be more *able* to do it, and we shall reap more Pleasure and Profit from laying out upon the Back and Bellies of the *Poor*, than from wasting it on our own Vanity. And now having fixed the Proportions of your Estates for Charity, you ought in the next Place to advise with your *Prudence* in what Proportions to *distribute* it: and here *Prudence* will direct you to differ in your *Distributions*, according to the different *Circumstances* of those whom you design to relieve by them. To such as are of a *lower* Rank, *Prudence* directs to give by *little* and *little*, according to their emergent *Necessities*; yet so as not always to limit your Alms to their bare *Necessities*, but sometimes to extend them even to their *Refreshment* and *Recreation:* that so together with their *Toil* and *Drudgery*, they may now and then enjoy some Sabbath for the *Ease* of Human Nature: But to such whose Fortunes are by *Loss* and *Accident* sunk and declined, both Decency and Mercy requires us to *enlarge* the Proportion of our Alms; considering how great a Fall it is from *Plenty* to *Necessity*, and consequently how much more is necessary to raise up such *dejected* Creatures, who are so unexperienced to Misery, into any Degree of *Comfort* or *Self-enjoyment*.

Fifthly and Lastly, We ought to exercise our *Prudence* also in the *Manner* of bestowing and conveying our Alms; so as that we may oblige both by *what* we give, and by the *way* of our giving it. And accordingly *Prudence* will sometimes direct us to *search* and *find* out just Needs, and *prevent* the Poor from asking, by *surprizing* them with a Kindness which they did not look for: By which Means we shall strengthen their *Faith* in the Providence of God, who thus creates them Friends out of the Dust, and brings them Supplies without, and beyond their Expectations. And then in giving, *Prudence*

dence will direct us not to *upbraid* the Want, or *insult* over the Miseries of those we give to; for that would be to feed them with a Bit and a Knock, and to *sophisticate* our *Mercy* with *Cruelty*. And when any miserable Creature would borrow, or beg of us, *Prudence* will advise us not to turn him away with *Scorn*; nor yet to remove him at a Distance, with Signs of *Disdain*, or *contemptuous* Violence; but if we see Reason to grant him his Request, to do it with *ready* and *open* Hand, that so the *Freedom* of our Charity may *raise* and *enhanse* the Comfort of it; and that that which we design for a *Relief* and *Succour*, may leave no *Sting* behind it in the Mind of the Receiver. And above all we ought to take especial Care, not to oppress the *Modesty* of the Humble, especially of those who have been wont to *give*, and not to *receive*; not to relieve them with *lofty* Looks, or *angry* Words, or a *scornful* and *severe* Behaviour; not to *expose* their Poverty by the divulging our Charity, or conveying it to them in the *open View* of the World; but to hand our Relief to them in such a *secret* and *benign*, *courteous* and *obliging* Manner, as that they may receive it with *Chearfulness*, and without *Blushing* and *Confusion*. And then as for those whose *constant* Necessities have habituated them to ask, and receive with more *Confidence*, and *Assurance*; our *Prudence* will direct us to convey our Alms to them with such a Mixture of *Severity* and *Sweetness*, as neither to encourage them to grow upon our Charity, nor drive them into Desperation of it.

I now proceed to press and enforce the *Practice* of this great Duty, with some *Motives* and *Arguments*, which are these that follow. First, *Almsgiving* is imposed upon us as a *necessary* Part of our *Religion*. Secondly, 'Tis recommended to us by the *Examples* of *God*, and of our *Saviour*. Thirdly, it is a *substantial* Expression of our *Love* and *Gratitude* to God, and our Saviour. Fourthly, it charges an *high Obligation* to us upon the Accounts of God and our Saviour.

I. Consider that to give *Alms* is imposed upon us as a *necessary* Part of our *Religion*; that is, when God hath furnished us with *Abilities* and *Opportunities* to do it. For where we cannot give *Money* to relieve the Poor, our *Pity* and our *Prayers* are accepted for Alms: *For if there be a willing Mind*, (says the Apostle) that is a Charitable Heart, *it is accepted according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not*, 2 Cor. viii. 12. But where a Man hath, it is his indispensable Duty to do accordingly; for *pure Religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their Affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the World*, Jam. i. 27. And that this Visitation is to be performed with an open and a liberal Hand, the same Apostle informs us, Jam. ii. 15, 16. *If a Brother or a Sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in Peace, be ye warmed and filled, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the Body, what doth it profit?* That is, if instead of *Food* and *Raiment*, you only give him fair *Words* and good *Wishes*, what doth it profit him? Or what Advantage can you expect to reap by it? And to the same purpose, 1 John iii. 17. *But whoso hath this World's good, and seeth his Brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in him?* That is, let him pretend what he pleases, he hath not one Spark of *Love* to *God* or true *Religion* in his Bosom. So that for Men to pretend to *Religion*, who are *able* to relieve the Poor, and yet *refuse* it, is one of the greatest *Mockeries* in the World; for howsoever Mens *Covetousness* may bribe their *Conscience* to dispense with the Obligations of *Almsgiving*, as if it were only a *carnal* Ordinance, or useless Relique of *Popery*; a *holy* Cheat, a *devout* Drunkard, a *pious* Fornicator are not greater *Contradictions* in the Sense of Scripture, than a *hard-hearted*, a *stingy*, and a *Hide-bound* Saint. For though our *Religion* doth by no means warrant us in such a vain and fond Opinion of our good *Works*, as to think we *merit* Heaven by them; or to presume to drive a *Bargain* with God, by putting our *good Works*

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into the Balance with an *infinite* and *eternal* Reward, our Hopes of which we wholly owe to the *infinite Goodneſs* of God through *Jeſus Chriſt*; yet it requires them of us as a *neceſſary Condition*, upon which God hath entailed all our future Bliſs, and without which we can never hope for Admittance into the Kingdom of God. So that if we are *able* to relieve the Poor, and yet will *not* when we have *Opportunity*; by ſhutting up our Bowels againſt them, we ſhut the Door of Heaven againſt our *ſelves*; and muſt one Day expect to receive the ſame Anſwer from God, that we give to them; *I have nothing for you, no Mercy, no Heaven for ſuch unmerciful Wretches, as would rather ſuffer their poor Brethren to periſh, than part with a Penny to relieve them.* For of this Doom our Saviour himſelf hath fairly forewarned us, *Matth.* xxv. 41, 42, 43. *Go ye curſed into everlaſting Fire; for when I was hungry, ye fed me not, when I was naked, ye cloathed me not:* So that from any Encouragement our Religion gives us, we may as well hope to go to Heaven without *Faith* and *Repentance*, as without giving of Alms according to our Ability and Opportunity.

II. Conſider that giving of *Alms* is highly recommended to us by the *Examples* of God, and our Saviour. For as for *God*, the whole Series of his *Providence* is little elſe but a continued Dole of *Alms* and *Charities* to his Creatures: It was his *Charity* that *founded* this vaſt and magnificent *Hoſpital* of the World, that *ſtocked* it with ſuch a numberleſs Swarm of Creatures, and *endowed* it with ſuch plentiful Proviſions for the Support and Maintenance of them all; ſo that we do all of us live upon *his Alms*, and depend upon *his* boundleſs *Charity*, for every Breath of *Air* we draw; for every Bit of *Bread* we eat, and for every *Rag* of *Clothes* we wear. And indeed what are all the *good Things* of this World but ſo many Effluxes and Arguments of his *Almighty Liberality?* Look every where about *Nature*, conſider the whole Tenor of his *Providence*, ſurvey all the Works and Actions of his *Hands*, and you ſhall find them all conſpiring in that amiable Character the Pſalmiſt gives of him, *Pſal.* cxix. 68. *Thou art good, and thou doſt good.* So that in relieving the Neceſſities of others we act the Part, and the beſt Part too of the *Almighty Father* of Beings; who ſits at the upper End of the Table, and carves to his whole Creation. Hence St. *Gergory Nazianzen*, ſpeaking of the Charitable Man, ſaith that he is τῷ ἀτυχοῦντι Θεὸς, τὸ ἔλεον τοῦ Θεοῦ μιμησάμενος. οὐδὲν γὰρ οὕτως ὡς τὸ εὖ ποιεῖν ἄνθρωπος ἔχει Θεοῦ· i. e. *A God to the Unfortunate, imitating the Mercies of God: For Man hath in nothing ſo much of God as in doing good*; which is doubtleſs the moſt *Divine* and *Godlike* Thing, that a Creature is capable of. What then can be more honourable, or more becoming a *Creature*, than to tread in the Footſteps of *God*, to tranſcribe *his* Nature and Actions, and be a kind of *Vice-God* in the World? Surely did we but underſtand and conſider how *divinely magnificent* it is to *ſupply* the Neceſſities, and *contribute* to the Happineſs of others; we ſhould court it as our *higheſt Preferment*, and bleſs God upon our bended Knees for deeming us worthy of ſuch an *illuſtrious Employment*, and that among the numerous Bleſſings he hath heaped upon us, he hath vouchſafed to admit us to *ſhare* with himſelf in the *Glory* of *doing good.*

And as the Example of *God* doth highly recommend to us relieving of the *Poor* and *Miſerable*, ſo alſo doth the Example of our Saviour. For it was for *this* that he left his Father's Boſom, and came down from Heaven into our Nature, that he might *relieve* a poor periſhing World, and reſcue it from eternal Ruin. And what a *glorious* Recommendation of *Charity* is this, that the Son of God choſe rather to *do good* upon Earth than to *reign* over Angels in Heaven? And while he was here, the ſole Employment he thought *worthy* of himſelf, was to *relieve* the Miſerable, to *feed* the Hungry, to *cure* the Blind and the Lame, to *reſtore* the Sick, to *inſtruct* the Ignorant, and *relaim* the Rebellious. This was the *Drift* of all his Actions, this the *Subject* of his Miracles, and this the *Scope* of all his Doctrines: So that his whole *Life* was nothing elſe but a continued Train of *Beneficences*, for the Apoſtle tells

tells us in the x*th* of the *Act.* 38. that *he went about doing Good.* Consider this therefore, O thou *hard-hearted* Christian, that stoppest thy Ears, against the poor Man's Cries! What would thy *blessed Lord* have done, had he been in *thy* Case and Circumstances! Would *He*, who had so much *Compassion* on the Multitude, as to work a *Miracle* to feed them, have turned that miserable Wretch away as thou dost, without the least Dram of *Comfort* and *Relief?* Would *he*, whose Heart and Hand was always *open* to the Poor and Miserable, have despised the poor Man's Moans as *thou dost*, or *shut* his Bowels of Compassion against him? Do but peruse the Pattern of *his* Life, and scan over *his* whole Behaviour; and see if there be any one Action in all that great *Examplar*, that doth not upbraid thee, and cry *Shame* upon thee for entitling thy *narrow*, *cruel*, and *stingy* Self a *Disciple* to such a *merciful*, *generous*, and *liberal* Master; and if so, learn for the future either to be so *honest* as to follow his Rule and Example, or else so *modest* as to disclaim thy Relation to him.

III. Consider that giving of *Alms* is a most *substantial* Expression of our *Love* and *Gratitude* to God, and our Saviour. How much we are obliged to express our *Gratitude* to God, for these our outward *Enjoyments* and *Abilities* to do Good to others, is evident from hence; because we *receive* them from him, and do *hold* them in virtue of his Donation. For to suppose our selves *independent Possessors* of them, is in effect to *divest God* of his Dominion, and to *strip him* into an insignificant Cypher, that only sits above in the Heavens, like an Almighty *Sardanapalus*, with his Arms folded in his Bosom; and no further concerning himself in the Affairs of this lower World, than to look down from his Throne, and please himself to see Men scrambling for their several Shares of it. But if we suppose him, as we have infinite Reason to do, the *Almighty* Author, and *supreme* Disposer of all Things; then we must acknowledge, that 'tis from *his* overflowing *Bounty* that we derive whatever we possess; that 'tis the Gold of *his* Mines that enriches us, the Crops of *his* Fields that feed us, the Fleeces of *his* Beasts that cloath us, and that *every* good Thing we enjoy is handed to us by the Ministry of *his* all-disposing *Providence.* And since we owe all to *his Bounty*, and in our greatest Flourish are but *his Almsmen* and *Pensioners*; how deeply are we obliged to return upon him in the Oblations of *Love* and *Thanksgiving?* And since *Love* and *Gratitude* consist either in the Affection of the *Mind*, or in the verbal *Signification* of it, or in the effectual *Performance* of good Things, to the Person whom we *thank* and *love*; this last is the most *compleat* and *substantial* Expression of the *Reality* of our Words and Affections. For though *Good-Will* is indeed the Root of *Love* and *Gratitude*; yet *that* lying under Ground and out of Sight, we cannot conclude its Being and Life without *visible Fruits* of Beneficence to the Person whom we *thank* and *love:* And as for *good Words*, they are at best but the *Leaves* of Love and Gratitude; but 'tis *good Works* that are the real *Fruits* of them, by which their *Sincerity* is demonstrated. For as no Man doth ever impress a *false* Stamp upon the *finest* Metal, so *costly* Thanks and Love are seldom *counterfeit.* It is to decline spending their *Goods*, or their *Pains*, that Men do so often *forge* and *feign*, pretending to make up in *wishing* well the Defects of *doing* so, and paying down *Words* instead of *Things:* But where *Works* are wanting, there is no *Expression* of our Love or Gratitude can either be *real* in itself, or *acceptable* to God. So that we may spare our *Breath*, if we keep back our *Substance*; for our *close* Hand giveth the Lye to our *full* Mouth, and all our *verbal Praises* of God, when we will part with nothing for his sake, are only so many *empty Compliments*, and *down-right Mockeries.* But then do our Love and Gratitude to God discover their *Reality*, when it appears by our *Actions* that we think nothing too dear for him; when for *his* sake who hath fed and cloathed us and abundantly supplied *our* Necessities, we are ready upon all Opportunities to feed and cloath and supply the Necessities of *others.* And can we think any Thing *too dear*, by which we may express our Gratitude to *Him*, upon whose

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overflowing Bounty we depend for *every Blessing* we have, or hope for; who hath provided not only this *Temporal* World for our *Bodies*, but also an *Eternal* Heaven for our *Souls*; and hath sent his *Son* to us from his own Bosom to tread our way to it, and conduct us thither; or can we think any Thanks *too costly* for that *blessed Son*, who never grudged to come down from Heaven into this Vale of Miseries, and pour out his *Blood* for our sakes? Was it not much harder for him to part with *Heaven*, than 'tis for you to part with a little *Money*? And can you think it much to bestow an *Alms* for his *sake*, who never grudged to lay down his *Life* for *yours*? This is the Argument of the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* viii. 9. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.*

IV. Consider that giving of *Alms* charges an *high Obligation* to us, upon the Accounts of *God* and our *Saviour*. For *God* lends the poor Man his *Name*; and allows him to crave our Succours for *his* sake: he gives him *Credit* from *himself* to *us* for what he stands in need of, and bids him charge what he receives upon *his own* Account, permitting to reckon himself *obliged* thereby, and to write him down our *Debtor*: So that when we stop our Ears to the Cries of the *Poor*, he reckons *himself* repulsed by us, and interprets it as a rude Affront offered to his *own Person*, it being offered to one that bears his *Name*, and wears his *Livery*. For the *poor Man*'s Rags are the Badges of his Relation to *God*, and his *Wants* are the Mouths by which *God* himself intreats our Relief, and Succour; assuring us that he will reckon it to our selves, and accept it as kindly at our Hands as if we had relieved him in *his own* Person. *For he that hath pity upon the poor*, (saith the Wise Man) *lendeth unto the Lord*, Prov. xix. 17. in which one Sentence methinks there is more Rhetorick, than in a whole Library of Sermons: And surely did we but understand, and consider it in its full *Emphasis*, we should not need such Volumes of Instructions, but might easily learn to be charitable by an *Epitome*. " O blessed God! That thou should'st own thy self my Debtor, " only for repaying the a Part of what thou hast lent me, and of what is " still thy own by an unalienable Propriety; that thou who art the great " Landlord of the World, should'st thus acknowledge thy self indebted to " thy poor Tenant, for paying thee a small Quit-rent, a Pepper-corn of " Homage for what I hold in thy Right, and by thy Bounty! And yet thus it is, he *lends* us our Estates, and then writes himself our *Debtor*, for that small Part which we *repay* him in Works of *Piety* and *Charity*. And as God puts our Alms to his own Account, so doth our Saviour also: For so, *Matth.* xxv. 40. *In as much* (says he) *as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me*; that is, I account my self obliged by it, and do receive it at your Hands with the same *Kindness* and *Acceptance*, as if you had been with me in my State of Humiliation, and shewed me all this Mercy in my *own Person*. And when both *God* and my *Saviour* do send a poor Wretch to me in *their* own *Name*, and *Person*, and desire me for *their* Sakes and upon *their* Accounts to relieve him: Can I be either so *ungrateful* to *them*, to whom I am indebted for all that I have or do hope for, or so *wanting* to my own *Interest*, as to *neglect* so fair an Opportunity of making them some *Return* of their Favours, and thereby *obliging* them to heap more Favours upon me? For when in giving to the Poor I give to *God* and my *Saviour*, what glorious *Compensations* may I expect from such *kind* and *liberal* Paymasters: *He that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully*, says the Apostle, speaking of *Alms*, 2 Cor. ix. 6. for he sows in the richest Soil, in the fruitful Hands of *God*, and his *Saviour*; where the Seed being nourished with *infinite Bounty* never fails to increase and multiply a Thousand-fold. *For God is not unrighteous, to forget your Work and Labour of Love which ye have shewed towards his Name, in that ye have ministred to the Saints and do minister*, Heb. vi. 10.

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Though he may sometimes *defer*, yet he never *forgets* to return a charitable Work: So that you may *safely* reckon upon it, that so much as you have bestowed in Works of Charity, so much with vast *Increase* and *Interest* you have *secured* to you in the Hands of *God*; who will either return it to you hither in *temporal* Blessings, or, which is a thousand times better, repay it to you with infinite Interest in the Weight of your *eternal* Crown. For so our Saviour promises the young Man, that if he would *give* what he had to the *Poor*, he should have *Treasure in Heaven*, Matth. xix. 21. So that by giving *Alms* we make the Earth tributary to Heaven, and in a nobler Sense than the new System of *Astronomy* teaches, advance it into a *Celestial* Body; and consequently enrich not only our *Selves*, but our *Wealth* too, by thus *transmitting* it to Heaven before us, as it were by *Bills* of Exchange, to be repaid us when we come there in an *everlasting Treasure* of Happiness. And when by relieving the *poor Man*'s Needs, we may thus transmute our *Dross* into *Gold*, and, which is more, our *perishing* Gold into *immortal* Glory, What Man in his Wits would refuse any fair Opportunity of making such a *blessed Exchange?*

Chap. IV.

Of the eternal Reasons and Grounds of Mercy.

HAving shewn at large what *Mercy* is, and to what particular *Duties* it extends, I shall now proceed to the second Thing, *viz.* the *Eternal Reasons* upon which it is founded and rendered *Morally Good.* Which I shall reduce to these five Particulars;

First, The Suitableness of it to the *Nature* of *God:*
Secondly, The Convenience of it with the *Frame* and *Constitution* of *Human Nature*:
Thirdly, The *near* and *intimate Relation* of those Persons to us upon whom our Mercy is to be exercised:
Fourthly, The *Equitableness* of it to *our own* State and Circumstances:
Fifthly, The *Necessity* of it to the tolerable Well-being of *Human Society.*

I. One eternal Reason upon which *Mercy* is founded and render'd *morally Good*, is the Suitableness of it to the *Nature* of *God*; which abounding as it doth with all the possible Kinds and Degrees of *Perfection*, is an *infinitely full* and *everlasting* Fountain of Happiness to *itself*; so that it cannot wish for any Kind, or at any Degree of *Blessedness* beyond the Enjoyment of *it self*, and those infinite Complacencies it takes in its *own* essential *Beauties* and *Perfections:* And having such an *inexhaustible* Treasure of Happiness within *it self*, it can have no *need* of, or *Dependance* upon any Thing *without* it; nor consequently be liable to any Temptation to oppress, or render others *miserable*, either for the *Security*, or *Augmentation* of its own Revenues: And as he who is *infinitely happy* can have no Temptation to render others miserable, so his own *Happiness* cannot but incline him to render the Miserable *Happy*. For so from a Natural Principle of *Self-Love*, every Being stands inclined to beget, and propagate its own *Likeness* and consequently every Being that is *Happy*, cannot but be inclined to make *others* so, so far as it consists with its own Interest. Since therefore *God* is not only Happy in *himself*, but so securely Happy, as that he can contribute what he pleases to the Happiness of *others* without any Prejudice to his own; his own *Self-Love*, must necessarily incline him to beget his own *Likeness* on his Creatures, and so *Propagate* his

2 Happiness

Happiness through the World. And being thus inclined by his own *Self-Love* to transform all other Beings into his *Likeness*, that is, to make them happy as he is happy; he must needs be tenderly affected with the Miseries of his Creatures, and immutably inclined, so far as it is just and wise, to *succour* and *relieve* and render them *happy*. Thus *Mercy*, you see, which is a good Will to the Miserable, doth most necessarily result from God's own *Self-Love*; and consequently is an inseparable *Principle* of his *Nature*: And accordingly God proclaims himself to *Moses*, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. *The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, long-suffering, abundant in Goodness and Truth, keeping Mercy for Thousands, forgiving Iniquity and Transgressions:* And hence his Mercy is said to be *everlasting*, Psal. c. 5. and to be *from everlasting*, Psal. ciii. 17. and to *endure for ever*, Psal. cvi. 1. and he is said to be *Rich in Mercy*, Ephes. ii. 4. and is styled *the God of all Grace*, 1 Pet. v. 10. and the *Father of Mercies*, 2 Cor. i. 3. Now the *Nature* of God is the supreme *Example*, and *Pattern* of all rational Natures; and so far forth as *ours* do swerve and deflect from *his*, they are maimed and imperfect. For his *Will* is our *Law*, not merely because 'tis his Will, but because it is over-ruled by the *infinite Perfections* of his Nature, by his Wisdom and Justice, his Mercy and Goodness; which if upon an *impossible* Supposition, he should Will contrary to, *that* Will would be *no* Law, *i. e.* it would have no Force upon our Consciences to oblige us to obey it. So that the supreme Law is the *Nature* of *God*, by which his Will *is*, and all other Wills *ought* to be concluded and determined; and whatsoever we discover in *his* Nature either by *Reason*, or *Revelation*, that is communicable to *ours*, we ought to follow and imitate it as our sovereign *Pattern* and *Exemplar*. Since therefore both *Reason* and *Revelation* do so plainly discover a most *merciful* Inclination in the *Nature* of God; this is an everlasting Reason why we should be merciful: And this is the Reason our Saviour urges, *Luk.* vi. 36. *Be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful*; that is, Let it be seen that you are the *Children* of God, by your Participation of his *Nature*, which is infinitely *Benevolent* to the Miserable; for there is nothing sinks you farther from God, or renders you more *unlike* him, than a *cruel* and *unmerciful* Temper: 'Tis this that blackens and deforms your Souls, that wreaths and distorts them into a *contrary* Figure, to the most amiable *Nature* of the Father of Spirits. For as the highest Perfection is the *Nature* of *God*, and that is a most *merciful* one; so the lowest Imperfection is the *Nature* of *Devils*, and that is a most *cruel* one: And therefore as by *Mercy* we incline towards the *Nature* of *God*, which is the *Land-mark* we ought to follow; so by *Cruelty* we decline towards the *Nature* of *Devils*, which is the *Sea-mark* we ought to avoid.

II. Another eternal Reason upon which *Mercy* is founded and rendered *morally Good*, is the Convenience of it with the *Frame* and *Constitution* of *human Nature*; in which the wise Author of Nature hath implanted a *natural Sympathy* between those that partake of it, in each others Pains and Pleasures. So that tho' the *human Nature* be largely *diffused* and *spread* through infinite *Numbers* of Individuals, which by vast Distances of Time and Place are separated from one another; yet as if it were but all one *common* Soul, operating in *several* Bodies in *several* Times and Places, it feels almost in every *one* Body, what it enjoys, or suffers in every *other*; and whether it be pleased, or offended in *one* Individual, is pleased or offended in them *all*: And though the Sense be *quickest* in that Individual Part or Member of *human Nature*, upon which the *Pain* or *Pleasure* strikes immediately, yet all the *rest*, how distant soever in Time or Place, as soon as they have *notice* of it, are sensibly *touched*, and *affected* with it. For thus when we read, or hear of the Calamities of *other* Men, our Bowels yearn by a *natural Sympathy*, though they are never so distant from us, and are no otherwise re-

lated to us than as they *partake* of our *Natures*; and though they are long since dead, and out of the Reach of any Assistance, yet their Miseries, without any Motives of *Reason* or Discourse, strike us into a soft *Compassion*; yea, though we know the Calamities which we read or hear of, to be nothing but *Romantick* Fictions, yet the very *Imagination* of them is ready to melt us into Tears, in despite of our *Will* and our *Reason*. Nor is this visible only in Persons that are *adult*, but even in little *Children*; who as soon as they are capable of taking notice of Things, do without any *Reason* express themselves pained and afflicted with the dissembled *Griefs* and *Sufferings* of those that attend them. All which are most evident Instances of that general *Sympathy*, which naturally intercedes between all Men; since we can neither see, or hear of, nor imagine *anothers Miseries*, without being touched with a sensible *Pain* and *Affliction*.

Against which I know no other Objection can be urged but this; that there are sundry Instances of Men, who seem to have arrived to that Degree of *Cruelty*, as to take Pleasure in afflicting *others*; and are so far from *Sympathizing* with their Pains, that they rather seem to be *recreated* with them. To which I shall only answer these two Things: *First*, That *that* Delight which some Men take in plaguing and afflicting *others*, proceeds not from their *natural Temper*, but is rather to be attributed to some violent *Effervescency*, and *Transport* of their Nature; such as are outragious *Anger*, or deep and inveterate *Revenge*; under both which Nature is *discomposed* and *disordered*, and chased into a *preternatural Ferment:* And accordingly when it is cooled again, and reduced to a *composed* Temper, instead of *rejoycing* in the Mischiefs it hath done, it usually *bewails* and *laments* them, and reflects upon them with a great deal of *Horror* and *Remorse*. Which is a plain Argument, that human Nature in it self is very *tender* and *compassionate*, how much soever it may be *accidentally* transported, by unnatural Passion super-induced upon it. *Secondly*, Suppose what is objected be true, that there are some Natures so *cankered*, and *diaboliz'd*, as to be really *pleased* with the Pains and Miseries of *others*; the Instances of this kind are so *few*, that they are only so many *Exceptions* to a *General Rule*; and therefore ought rather to be looked *upon* as so many *Monsters* of Men, than as the Standards of *Human Nature*. For as we do not look upon it as *natural* to Men to be born without Hands or Feet, though there have been Instances of such *monstrous* and *unnatural* Births; so neither ought we to think it *natural* to Men to be *cruel* and *unmerciful*, because of a *few* Devils in human Shape, that have pulled out their own Bowels of *Compassion*. If we would understand what is *human* and *natural*, we must take our Measures from those who in all other Cases do live most conformably to the *Laws of Nature*; and to be sure the more *regular* Mens Natures are, the more you will find them abounding with *Pity* and *Compassion*. For hence it is that *Mercy* and *Compassion* are called *good Nature* and *Humanity*, and their contraries, *Ill Nature* and *Inhumanity*, because as the former are inseparable Properties of *well-formed* and *regulated* Natures; so the latter are such hideous *Deformities* of Nature, as do in effect divest us of our *Manhood*, and render us a kind of *Monsters* among Men. By all which it is evident, that the great Creator hath framed and composed our Nature to *Mercy*, and implanted in it a *tender Sympathy* and *fellow-feeling* of each others Miseries; by which, as by a Voice from Heaven, he doth eternally call upon us to let out these our *natural* Compassions into *Acts* of *Mercy* towards one another. For the Voice of *Nature* is a genuine *Eccho*, and Repetition of the Voice of *God*; who, by creating in us such a tender *Sympathy* with one another, doth most expresly signify that it is his Will that we should mutually *succour* and *relieve* each other. For to what other End should

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he create in me such a *Feeling* of my Brother's Miseries, but only to provoke me by it to *ease* and *succour* him? Why should he cause me to *partake*, as I do, of other Mens *Pains* and *Pleasures*, but to excite me thereby to use my best Endeavour to *asswage* their *Pains*, and *advance* their *Pleasures?* Since therefore the *God* of *Nature* hath made my *Neighbour's* Misery *my* Pain, and *his* Content *my* Pleasure; and by the indissoluble Bands of mutual *Sympathy* hath linked our Fortunes and Affections together, so that 'tis for my *own* Ease to ease *him*, and for my own Pleasure to please *him*; this is an eternal and immutable Reason, why I should be *merciful* to him.

III. Another *eternal Reason* upon which *Mercy* is founded, and by which it is constituted *morally Good* is the near and intimate *Relation* of those Persons to us, upon whom our *Mercy* is to be exercised. For there is, between Men and Men, a most intimate *Kindred* and *Relation*; as being all derived from one *common Root*, whose prolifick Sap hath sprouted into infinite Branches, which, like Boughs of *Nebuchadnezzar's* Tree, have spread themselves to all the Ends of the Earth. And as we are all Children of the *same Parents*, and consequently *Brethren* by Nature; so we do all Communicate of the *same Nature*, as being compounded of the *same Materials*, and animated with the *same Forms*, having all the *same Faculties*, *Inclinations*, *Appetites*, and *Affections*; and being only so many several *Copies*, transcribed from the *same Original*: And there is no other *Difference* between us, but what is made by Things that are *extrinsick* and *accidental* to our Natures. So that in short we are *all* but *one* and the *same* Substance, attired in a diverse Garb of *Circumstances*, divided into several *Times* and *Places*, and diversify'd by the little *Accidents* of Colour and Stature, Figure and Proportions: In all which perhaps within a little while we shall *differ* as much from our *Selves*, as we do now from *other* Men. For do but compare your Selves in your *Youth*, or in your *Health*, or in your *Prosperity*, with your Selves in your *Age*, or in your *Sickness*, or in your *Adversity*; and you will find as much *Difference* between your *Selves* and your *Selves*; as you do now between your *Selves* and *Others*: So that in reality *other* Men are as much *you* now, as *you* are your *Selves* in other Circumstances; we being all the same in every *stable*, *essential* Ingredient of our Natures, and being only diversified by such *Accidents* from one another, as will in a little time diversifie us from our Selves. Thus the Apostle says, *Acts* xvii. 26. *He hath made of one Blood*, that is, of one Nature, *all Nations of Men to dwell on the Face of the Earth.* There being therefore such a close Conjunction, such a strick Union of *Natures* between Men and Men, so that every *other* Man is every other Man's *self*, a few trifling Circumstances excepted; this is an everlasting Reason, why we should treat *Them* as we do our *selves*, with all Compassion and Humanity. For to commiserate *one* who is my other *self*, is that which I am obliged to by my own *Self-love*, which God hath made an eternal *Law* to my *Nature*: 'Tis to feed a Member of my own *Body*, and nourish a Branch of my own *Root*; yea, 'tis to feed and succour my own *Nature*, that is only individuate from mine by I know not what *Metaphysical* Principle, and cloathed in different *Accidents*, and *Circumstances*. So that now the very same *Self-Love*, which doth so importunately instigate us upon all Occasions to redress our *own* Miseries, ought in all Reason to provoke us to relieve and succour *other* Men; since all the Miseries *They* endure, are the Miseries of *our own* Nature: insomuch that we run *their* Fortunes, and by a natural Communion are *Patarkers* of *their* Pains and Pleasures. For the *human Nature* which is common to *Us* and *Them*, endures the Smart of their Afflictions, and bleeds through every Wound that is given them; so that by pouring into those Wounds the Balsam of our

Mercy, we do an Act of *Kindness* to our *selves*, and wisely consult our *own* Preservation. As on the contrary, by dealing cruelly, and unmercifully by other Men, we do *affront* and *violate* our *own* Natures; and most unnaturally thwart that Principle of *Self-Love*, which God hath implanted in us for our own Preservation. For he whom thou treatest with so much *Contempt* and *Cruelty*, is thy own *self* individuated into another Person; and wears thy *Nature* under other Circumstances: He is a Man of thy Manhood, Flesh of thy Flesh, and Bone of thy Bone; and *no Man ever yet hated his own Flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it*, Eph. v. 29. Wherefore thou canst not deal cruelly by *him*, without wounding thy *self* through his Sides, and committing an *unnatural Outrage* upon the *Human Nature*, whereof he is equally *Partaker* with thee.

IV. Another *eternal Reason* upon which *Mercy* is founded, and rendered *morally good*, is the *Equitableness* of it to our own State and Circumstances: for no Man ever was, or ever can be so happy, as not to have *Need* of *Mercy* for himself. The *best* of Men are *Sinners* before God, and for that are liable without a World of *Mercy* to be rendered miserable for ever; and there are very *few* whose Conversations with Men have been so inoffensive, as ne'er to have merited *severe Retributions* at their Hand: And how *happy* and *prosperous* soever a Man's outward State and Circumstances may be at *present*, he cannot be *secure*, but the next turn of Affairs may tumble him Headlong thence into *Wretchedness* and *Calamity*. Now since every Man *might* have been, or may be miserable, what can be more *just* or *equitable*, than that we should deal with those that are so, as we would be dealt by if *we* were so? Put the Case then, as you may very reasonably do, that *You* were now as miserable, as that *wretched* Creature is that craves your Succour and Relief; would not *you* desire Relief with the same *Importunity* that he *doth?* Doubtless you would; the Sense of *Misery*, and the Desire of *Mercy* being naturally inseparable: Well, but why would *you* desire it? Why, *Because you are miserable*, you would say: And hath not *he* the same Reason to desire it of *you?* You may *want* what he *desires*, and if you should, you cannot deny but you should *desire* the *same:* And is there not all the Reason in the World, why you should *grant* him what you would *ask* for your self, if you were in his Circumstances, and he in yours? This therefore is eternally reasonable, that we should *give*, and *ask* by the same Measures; that we should grant that Succour to those that are miserable, which we should think fit to *ask* or *desire* of them, were We as *miserable* as They, and They as happy as We. For since we are all of us naturally *equal*, whatsoever is fit for *one*, must be fit for *another* in *equal* Circumstances. Either therefore it is not fit, that I should *desire* Relief *from* others when I am miserable, or else it is fit, that I should *grant* Relief *to* others when they are so: Which if I refuse, I must condemn my self, either for being *unreasonable* in desiring Mercy when I *need* it, or for being *unjust* in denying Mercy when I am *asked* it. I know, I may be miserable my self; and if ever I am, I know I cannot forbear desiring *others* to succour and relieve *me:* And can I blame them for desiring that of *me*, which I could not forbear desiring of *them*, were I in their Circumstances, and *they* in *mine?* And yet of Necessity I must either blame them for *desiring* of *me* what they do, or blame my *self* for *refusing* them what *they* desire; since whatsoever is *just* for them to desire of *me*, is very fit and *reasonable* for me to grant them: and if ever I should happen to want *Relief*, with what Face can I *desire* or *expect* it, who am deaf and inexorable to the Wants of *others?* So that if I will *shew* no Mercy, I were best take heed that I never *need* any, for if I should, it will be very *unreasonable* for me to expect it; because by my *unmerciful* Treatment of *others*, I have made a *Precedent* against my *self*; against which

which it would be Imprudence for me to plead for Mercy, either with God, or Men. With what Face can I ſupplicate for *Mercy* from the Hands of others, when I have ſo plainly declared by my *Actions*, that were I in their Stead, and they in *mine*, I would never grant them what I aſk for? And when my *Actions* do thus loudly deprecate the *Mercies* which I pray for, and enter ſuch an unanſwerable *Caveat* againſt my Claim and Pretence to them, it is but modeſt to let fall my Suit, and give up my Hope of *Mercy* for ever.

Fifthly and *laſtly*, Another *eternal* Reaſon upon which *Mercy* is founded and rendered *morally good*, is the Neceſſity of it to the tolerable Well-being of *human Societies.* That *God* is *good* and *merciful* to his Creatures, hath been ſufficiently demonſtrated from the *infinite* Beatitude of his Nature; which being an *unbounded* Ocean of Bliſs and Happineſs to it *ſelf*, muſt needs be abundantly communicative of Bliſs and Happineſs to *others*, according to the *Capacities* of their *Natures.* Since therefore *human Nature*, of all theſe ſublunary ones, contains the largeſt *Capacities* of Happineſs; we may be ſure that God not only *deſigns* its Welfare, but that he hath made all the *Proviſions* for it that are neceſſary in order thereunto. Notwithſtanding which, you ſee he hath at *preſent* expoſed it to ſo many evil *Accidents*, and *Contingencies*, that unleſs thoſe that are *Happy* will take ſome Care of the *Miſerable*, and we will all of us *mutually* ſuccour and relieve one another, there is not a *ſufficient Proviſion* made for our tolerable Well-being in this World. Since therefore it is evident even from the *eternal Principles* of God's Nature, that he is ſo infinitely *kind* and *benevolent* to us; and yet notwithſtanding this, he hath placed us in a Condition wherein we need *one another*'s Mercy, and cannot be happy without it; it neceſſarily follows, that it is his Will and Pleaſure that whereinſoever he hath left us unprovided, we ſhould *mutually* provide for one another; and that our *own Mercy* ſhould be inſtead of a *Counterpart* to ſupply thoſe *Defects* and void *Spaces*, which his Providence hath left us in our preſent Happineſs. For we being *free Agents*, God did not ſo provide for our Happineſs as to *exclude* our own *Virtue* from having an Hand in it; but hath only taken Care ſo to diſpoſe and order our Affairs, as that we may be Happy; if we will *contribute* our *Part*, and behave our ſelves towards *him*, *our ſelves*, and *one another*, ſo as is moſt conducive to our *own*, and one *another*'s Welfare. Since therefore he *deſigns* that *all* ſhould be Happy, and in order thereunto, tho' he hath not actually *made* them ſo, yet hath fairly *provided* that all may be ſo; it is plain that he hath left ſomething to be done on *our* Part, and expects we ſhould every one *contribute* what we are able towards every *other* Man's Happineſs. When therefore God places *another*'s Happineſs, or any Degree of it within the Power of *my Mercy*; it is plain that it is with an Intent, I ſhould employ that *Power* to make him happy; and conſequently that if I *laviſh* out upon my own Pleaſures and Conveniences that *Power* to relieve the *Miſerable* with which he hath entruſted me, and ſo permit them to *continue* miſerable, I am an *unfaithful* Steward to *his* Truſt, and *reſponſible* to him for all *their* Miſeries. In ſhort, ſince God by the eternal *Bent* and *Inclination* of his Nature aims at, and intends our Happineſs; but yet hath put us into a Condition, *wherein* without the *Aſſiſtance* of each other's *Mercy* we cannot be tolerably happy; this is a plain Demonſtration, that it is *his Will* we ſhould *aſſiſt* and *further* his Intention, by being *merciful* to one another. Whilſt therefore God permits *Miſery* in one, that is an immutable Reaſon why he ſhould exact *Mercy* from one another; ſince without that he can never obtain his *End*, which is the *Happineſs* of *all.* For, as ſince by the Laws of *Generation* he hath ordered all Men to come into the World *weak* and *helpleſs*, and *unable* to provide for themſelves; he was bound

bound in *Goodness* to oblige their Parents by a *natural* Στοργὴ and Affection, to *nourish* and take *Care* of them, till they grow able to take *Care* for *themselves*; that so they might not be utterly *abandoned:* So since he hath thought good to *expose* us here to so many *Miseries* and *Calamities*, he stood obliged by the *eternal Benignity* of his Nature, to oblige us by all the Bowels of *Mercy* to *succour* and *relieve* one another, 'till we are grown up to that *Perfection* of *Happiness* wherein we shall have no more need of Succour; that so at present we may not be left *destitute* and *forlorn*, but may find all that Relief in one another's *Mercy*, which is wanting to us in his *immediate Providence.* For 'tis for *wise* and *merciful* Ends that he permits us to be *miserable* here, to *correct* our Follies, and polish and *cultivate* our Nature, and *train* us up under a severe Discipline into a State of *everlasting Happiness*; and therefore for the Redress of these *Miseries*, which for our *Good* he is fain to inflict upon us, it was *necessary* he should consign us to the Protection of one another's *Mercy:* that so this for the *present* might be a Cordial to our *Griefs*, a Supply to our *Wants*, an *Ease* to our *Oppressions*, and a Sanctuary to our *Calamities*; till *Misery* hath effected the gracious *End* she designed it for, and then he will *release* our *Mercy* from its Work, and permit it to enjoy an *everlasting Sabbath.* But so long as he thinks fit to *continue* us in this State of *Misery*, his own *Benignity* will oblige *him* to oblige *us* to *assist* and *comfort* one another, by the *mutual* Exercise of our *Mercy*; that so being instead of *Gods* to one another, we may not be utterly *abandoned* to Wretchedness; but by *mutually succouring* each other might all of us be tolerably happy; which we should all of us most certainly be, were we but so *benign* and *merciful* to one another, as he *expects* and *requires.*

CHAP.

Chap. I.

Of the Nature of Mortification.

GOD having made us *free* Agents, and planted in our Natures an uncontroulable *Liberty* of *Choice*; in Wisdom he hath so ordered and disposed Things, that as we cannot be *miserable* unless we *will*, so neither shall we be *happy* whether we *will*, or *no*. For as his *Goodness* would not suffer him to make us necessarily *miserable*, so neither would his *Wisdom* permit him to entail our *Happiness* on our Natures, and make it inseparable to our Beings; for should he have done so, he must have altered the *Laws* of his own *wise Creation*, and made those Beings to act *necessarily*, which he made to act *freely*. For *Happiness* is the *End* of all our Actions; and therefore should God have made that *necessary* to us, he must have made us to act towards it with the same *Necessity* as inanimate Bodies do towards their proper Center; and consequently there would have been no such Thing, as a *free Agent* in the lower World. That we may always act therefore according to the Condition, and Frame of a *free Nature*, the Foundations of all our *Happiness* and *Misery* are laid in the *right Use*, or *Abuse* of our *Liberty*; and do immediately spring out of the *Wisdom*, or *Folly*, of our own *Choices:* So that if we chuse *wisely* according to the Laws of *Virtue* and right *Reason*, we do thereby advance towards that *happy* and *heavenly* State we were created for; as on the contrary, if we chuse *foolishly* according to the rash Counsels of our own *vicious Appetites* and *sensual Inclinations*, we thereby sink our selves deeper and deeper towards the Abyss of endless and inconceivable *Misery*. For such is the Frame and Constitution of our *Natures*, that we cannot be *good* and *miserable*, nor *vicious* and *happy*; and accordingly the Apostle sets before us the inevitable Fate of our own Actions, *Rom.* viii. 13. *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the Body, ye shall live.*

What these *Deeds* of the *Flesh*, or *Body* are, the Apostle tells us, *Gal.* v. 19, 20, 21. *The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; and they which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* This is the *Muster-roll* of that formidable Army of Wickednesses, with which we are to engage, and which we must vanquish, or perish for ever. *If ye mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live, i. e.* If ye kill and destroy them, if ye wholly *cease* from them, both as to the *outward* Act of them, and the inward Appetite and Inclination towards them: For *Mortification* doth not only consist in a formal Abstinence from the *outward* Act of Sin, or a superficial Skinning over the Orifice of its Wounds; but searches to the very Bottom of that putrid Core *within*, and eats out the *inward Corruption*, from whence those outward Blisters arise: It purges the *Heart* as well as the *Hands*, and drains those *impure Inclinations*, which are the *Springs* of all Impiety and Wickedness.

But to handle this Subject more particularly. I shall do three Things;

First, Shew wherein *Mortification* consists.

Secondly, What are the proper *Instruments* of it.

Thirdly, What are the most prevailing *Motives* of it.

I. Wherein

I. Wherein doth *Mortification* consist? I answer in these three Things. 1. In *Abstinence* from the *outward* Acts of Sin. 2. In not *consenting* unto *any* Sin. 3. In a *constant Endeavour* to extinguish our *involuntary* Sins.

I. *Mortification* requires *Abstinence* from the *outward* Acts of Sin: For it is impossible that any Man should mortify his Lusts, while he indulges himself in the free *Practice* of them; beause *Practice* is the Fuel that *foments* and *feeds* the inward vicious *Inclinations*, and both *pampers* and *enrages* the lustful *Appetite* of the Soul. For that *Delight* which we reap from acting our own Concupiscences, doth but *increase* and *provoke* them; it being *natural* to Men, when they have been *pleased* with any Action, to be more vehemently inclined to *repeat* it; the *Delight* which they found in the former Enjoyment *provoking* their Desires to enjoy it again. So that we may as well hope to put out a *Fire* by a continual feeding it with *Fuel*, and blowing it into *Flame*; as to mortify a *Lust*, whilst by our continued *practising* it we *nurse* and *cherish* it, and do at once *both feed* and irritate its Flames. If therefore we would ever *mortify* the Lusts of the Flesh, we must strictly *restrain* our selves from all *outward* Acts of them: For whilst we indulge our selves in *these*, we feed our Disease, and pamper our bad *Inclinations* into vicious *Habits*, and our vicious *Habits* into sinful *Necessities*.

II. Mortification consists in the Dissent of our *Wills* from all *sinful* Proposals. 'Tis no Piece of *Mortification* for a Man to abstain only from the *outward* Acts of Sin, if in the mean time his *Will* is so far *consenting* to it, as that he would practise it, were it not for some intervening *Hindrances*, or for *want* of a fair *Opportunity*. For in the Eye of *God*, to whom our inmost *Thoughts* and *Purposes* are all open and unmasked, the *Will* to Sin is the *Sin* that is willed, though it should never proceed into *Action*: With him it is *acted* as soon as it is *conceived*, and it is *conceived* as soon as ever it is thought of with *Consent*: It *grows* in the *Delight* we take in the *Speculation* of it, but is *ripened* in the Resolution of *committing it*. For when once we are *resolved* upon it, our *Heart* hath done its utmost towards it; and so our *Consenting* to it makes it perfect Sin, though it should never break out into *Action*. So that 'tis Nonsense to talk of *mortifying* our Sin, while it hath the Consent of our *Wills*, for though it is more *dangerous* in the *Action*, and approaches nearer to a *Habit*, because the Consent *continues* all the while we commit it, and is *confirmed* by the *Pleasure* we reap in the Commission, yet still it is *Sin*, though it is only *consented* to; and it lives in the *Purpose* though it breaths not out into the *Practice*. Our Enemy is not conquered, when it is only shut up within its Hold; and it doth but fortify itself *within*, while it wants Opportunities to sally out into *Action*. If we do not Sin, only because we *cannot*, or because we want *Opportunity*, we are but *Devils* in *Chains*; and never the less *guilty*, because we *cannot* do as much Mischief as we *would*: For he that *would* Sin if he *could*, hath sinned *already* as far as he is *able*; and so is every whit as *criminal* in the Account of God, as he that doth sin when he *can*. The *Mortification* of our Lusts therefore doth necessarily imply the withdrawing the *Consent* of our *Wills* from them, and the final divorcing them from the Embraces of our *Choice*: For while they enjoy our *Consent*, they *live* in us, and *rule* us, though they should never have the Opportunity to come abroad into our Practice.

III. Mortification consists in a *constant Endeavour* to subdue our *involuntary* Appetites and Inclinations to Sin. It is not sufficient that we do not *practise* Sin, nor *consent* to the Practice of it; but we must make it our *constant Endeavour* to wean, and abstract our selves from those *evil Tendencies* and *Incli-*

nations,

nations, which we have contracted by our former Sins: For though these *Inclinations* remaining in us are no farther our *Sin*, than we do *yield* and *consent* to them; yet while we patiently *harbour* them within our Bosoms, and do not honestly endeavour to *smother* and *extinguish* them, they are *chosen* and *voluntary*, and have the very *Bane* and *Formality* of Sin in them. Though we should be disabled from *Acts* of *Adultery*, yet while we retain with *Delight* our *Inclinations* towards it, and quietly *please* our selves in the fantastick Joys of it; while we freely entertain its *lewd* and *filthy Ideas*, and suffer them to walk to and fro upon the Stage of our *Fancies* without *Check* or *Controul*, we are still *adulterous* in the Sight of *God*, to whom our Lust is as obvious within the *Closet* of our Minds, as upon the *Theatre* of our Practice. We must not think therefore that our Sin is *mortified*, because we neither *practise* nor *consent* to the Practice of it; for while we have any *Inclinations* to Sin remaining in us, we must endeavour to *subdue* and *conquer* them. If we do not, we have only forced our Enemy into his last Retreat, where by our own *Neglect* we give him Opportunity to rally and reinforce himself against us: For our Sin still lives in our *Inclination* to Sin, and will soon, if it be not beaten thence, recover its broken Forces, and grow as formidable as ever. 'Tis true, he that doth not *consent* to his own evil Appetites, but constantly *denies* them those *vicious Gratifications* which they crave, takes an infallible Course to *starve* and *destroy* them: For as *these* were first raised in us, and afterwards nourished into Nature by our vicious *Practices*; so by refusing to practise those Sins which they incline us to, and by practising the *contrary Virtues*, we shall by degrees *abate* the Strength and Vigour of them: And as they decay, so *holy Inclinations* will spring up in their room; which being *heightned* and made *intense* by a constant Practice of *Holiness*, will by degrees *expel* these our *vicious Inclinations*, and grow into *Nature* and *Habit*. But merely to abstain from the *outward* Acts of Sin, is a *tedious* way of mortifying our *inward* Inclinations towards it; for *vicious Appetites* will live a great while, even upon *innocent Gratifications*. Though we should be *drunk* no more, yet if we indulge our selves the *utmost Liberties* of Sobriety, that will *continue* our Appetite to *Intemperance:* Though we should abstain from all *outward* Acts of *Lasciviousness*, yet unless we deny our selves some of the *lawful* Pleasures of the Body, these will *foment* our wanton *Inclinations:* Though we should not suffer our *Rage* and *Spite* and *Malice* to express themselves in any prohibited *Actions*; yet if we allow our selves even in *lawful* Anger, and *just* Resentments of Injuries, this will for a great while *preserve* and keep *alive* our most black and devilish *Propensions*. And besides that, this way of *abstaining* merely from Sin will make the Business of Mortification *tedious*, it is so full of *Hazard* and *Difficulty:* For he that only *abstains* from Sin, and *gratifies* his Inclinations as far as *lawfully* he may, is every moment in *danger* of exceeding the Line that parts the *utmost* of what is *lawful* from the *nearmost* of what is *sinful*. For *Inclination*, like all other Motions, is always *swiftest* when it is nearest its *Center*; and when once it is within the *Reach* and *Attraction* of its *beloved* Voice, then it hurries towards it with *Fury* and *Impatience*; insomuch that many times our *Conscience* proves too *weak* to stop the Course of its *impetuous* Motions: And then when once it hath *tasted* the forbidden Pleasure of its Sin, it immediately *recovers* all its *impaired Strength*, and many times grows *more fell* and *outragious* than ever; and so the Ground we *got* in a Month's *Abstinence* from our Sin, we lose again in a moment's *enjoying* it; by which Means the Work of *Mortification* becomes extreamly *difficult* and *hazardous*. Wherefore if ever we mean to *conquer* our *bad Inclinations*, we must not only *abstain* from the *Sins* we are inclined to, but also from the *Occasions* of them. If it be *Sensuality* we must starve it out by prudent *Fasting* and *Abstinence*; if *Devilishness*, we must force it out by *thwarting* and *contradicting* it in the Course of our Practice, and keep it at the greatest

distance from it: For *evil Inclinations* are not to be mortify'd without *Force* and *Violence*, and like *crooked* Staves, the speediest Way to make them *straight*, is to keep them bent for a while the *contrary* Way. This therefore is implied in our honest *Endeavour* to *mortify* our *involuntary Inclinations* to Sin, that we do not only forbear the *Sin* it self, but avoid the *Occasions* that lead to it; and *deny* our selves those *lawful* Liberties, which do nearly approach it, and set us upon the Brink of it. And thus you see wherein *Mortification* consists, namely in abstaining from the *outward Act*, and *inward Consent* to Sin, and in a *constant Endeavour* to mortify those *involuntary Inclinations* to Sin, which we have contracted in any former Course of wilful Sinning

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Chap. II.

Of the Means, *and* Instiuments *of* Mortification.

HAving explained wherein *Mortification* consists, I proceed in the next Place to consider what are the *Means* and *Instruments* of it: And these are chiefly these six;

First, *Faith.*
Secondly, *Consideration.*
Thirdly, *Resolution.*
Fourthly, *Discipline.*
Fifthly, *Frequent receiving of the Sacrament.*
Sixthly, *Constant Prayer.*

I *Faith*, or a thorough *Belief* of the Truth of our *Religion*; which will furnish us with such *Arguments* against our *Lusts*, as all the *Temptations* they can muster up will never be able to *resist*. Hence St. *John* tells us, that *This is the victory that overcometh the World even our faith*, 1 Epist. v. 4. where by the *World* we are to understand all those *Temptations* to Sin, that do arise from these outward worldly Objects wherewithal we are here surrounded. *Faith* therefore must needs be a mighty *Instrument* of *mortifying* our Sins, it being the *Victory* whereby we overcome all the *Temptations* to them: And indeed a firm *Belief* of the mighty Arguments of *Christianity* is in it self such an *efficacious Means* to dissuade us from sinning, that one would think it were impossible for the most *bold* and *resolute* Sinner to *withstand* it. For who but a *mad* Man would prostitute himself to the *Charms* and *Flatteries* of a base *Lust*, that believes that *Promise* which proposes a Heaven of *immortal Joys* to dissuade him from it? Who would be *frighted* into any Sin by the most amazing *Danger* that can threaten, or befal him, that credits that *Threat* which denounces a Hell of *endless* and *intolerable Woes* against every wilful Transgression? Did we but *believe*, that it cost the Son of God his dearest Blood to *redeem* us from our Sins; how could we be so *disingenuous* to our best *Friend*, as to *harbour* those Lusts that were *his Murderers*, and which he *abhors* more than the *Spear* that pierced his Side, or the *Nails* that gored his Hands and Feet? Yea, how could we be so *fool-hardy* as to *dally* with those Sins, which are so infinitely *odious* unto *God*, that he would not be *atoned* for them by any *meaner* Sacrifice than the

the *Blood* of his *own* Son? In a word, did we but *believe*, that we must all *appear* before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, to give a *strict Account* for whatsoever we have done in the Flesh: What *Temptation* could there be great enough to balance our Fear of that *dreadful* Tribunal? Doubtless, did we but heartily *believe* our Holy *Religion*, there is nothing in all the World would be so *terrible* as *Sin* to us; the mighty Arguments of the *Gospel* would so *over-awe* us, that we should not be able to think of it without *Horror* and *Amazement*; the very *Sight* of it would scare us like an *Apparition*, and cause us to run away from it in as great a *Fright*, as if the Devil himself were at our Heels. For, Lord! can I be so stupid, as to hug my *Lusts*, while I *believe* that I shall rue for it to all *Eternity*? Can I be so senseless of my own *Interest*, as to treat and entertain those *Vices*, which I verily *believe* will rob me of all that an *everlasting Heaven* means? No, no; Did I but *believe* the Propositions of the *Gospel*, doubtless I should sooner trust my *Body* among ravenous *Cannibals*, than my *Soul* among my *Sins*; and think my self much safer among *Vipers* and *Scorpions*, than in the Embraces of my *Lusts*; which whilst they wrap themselves in *amorous* Folds about me, *sting* me with an everlasting *Venom*. But our Misery is, that we are most of us *Christians* by *Chance*; and have taken up our *Religion* upon *Trust*, without ever satisfying our selves of its *Credibility*, or troubling our selves to enquire *why* or *wherefore*, we profess it: So that though perhaps we do not absolutely *disbelieve*, yet neither can we be properly said to *believe* it; it being a Matter we never troubled our selves about, so as to *enquire* whether it be *true* or *false*; and therefore it is no great Wonder, that it hath so *little Effect* upon us. For how can it be expected, that we should be *affected* with that which we do not *believe*; or be persuaded to part with those *Lusts* that are so *dear* to us, upon *Proposals* that we give *no Credit* to, and of whose *Truth* or *Falshood* we never troubled our selves to *enquire*? Let us therefore but satisfie our own *Reason* of the Truth of our *Religion*, by considering impartially those mighty *Evidences* it is founded upon; and then it will soon captivate our Souls into the *Love* and *Obedience* of it; and none of our *Lusts* will be able to withstand its mighty *Force* and *Efficacy*, but will all be *forced* to fall down before it, as *Dagon* did before the *Ark* of the *Lord*. This therefore is the first *Instrument* of *Mortification*, *viz.* A hearty *Belief* of the Christian *Religion*.

II. Another *Instrument* of *Mortification* is *Consideration*. For we have no other Way to mortifie our *Lusts*, but only by *Reason* and *Argument*, and 'tis impossible that any Arguments should persuade us, unless we duly *consider* the Strength and Force of them. 'Tis true, our *Religion* furnishes us with sufficient Arguments to baffle all the *Temptations* of Sin; But what will it signifie to have good Arguments in our *Bibles*, while they are out of our *Thoughts*, and are not at all *regarded* by us? Do we expect they should cure our *Souls*, as Charms and Amulets do our *Bodies*, merely by being written upon Paper, and worn in our Bosoms? Why then may they not as well charm a *Swine* into Cleanliness, or a savage *Tyger* out of his natural Fierceness and Cruelty? But alass! all the Arguments in the World to an *inconsiderate* Mind, are but like so many Arrows shot against an *Anvil*, where they cannot stick, but are forced to rebound and fly off again without making any *Impression* on it. And hence in the Parable of the *Seed*, the Reason which our Saviour assigns why it prospered not in the *High-way*, the *Stony*, and *Thorny* Ground, was either that they *considered* not *at all*, or not *enough*, Mat. xiii. 19, 20, 21, 22. either they were *wholly inconsiderate*, so that the Seed of God's Word lay scatter'd upon the Surface of their Minds, like Corn upon the High-way, to be *picked*, and *devoured* by the Fowls of the Air; or they *considered* but a *little* so that the divine Seed being not throughly rooted in

them, produced only a present Fit, and Pang of Religion, which in the Heat of the next Temptation *withered* and *died* away; or else they *considered* but by *halves*, their Minds being all over-grown with worldly Cares and Thoughts, which quickly choked that Holy Seed, and rendered it *barren* and *unfruitful*. This *Inconsideration*, you see, will render the most *powerful* Motives *insignificant*; and it will be to no Purpose for *Religion* to knock at the Door of our Souls, while our Reason is *asleep*, and our Understandings *deaf* to its Importunities. But would we be but so true to our own Interest, as to inure our Selves to a thorough *Consideration* of our *Religion*, that would arm us with such *invincible* Arguments, as none of our Lusts would be able to withstand; and we should have so many good Thoughts, like *Guardian Angels*, perpetually encamped about us, that whensoever the *Devil* or the *World* besieged us, they would find our Souls *impregnably* fortified against all their Batteries. If in the Morning before we go into the World, we would sit down a while, and take a little Pains to *antidote* our Souls with such Thoughts as these; *O my Soul! now am I going into the Midst of a Crowd of Temptations, where ever and anon one bad Object or other will be beckoning to me, and inviting me unto that which is evil; let us therefore consider a little what Answer we shall return to all their Importunities: By and by perhaps some great Opportunity of Gain may present it self before thee, to tempt thee to a Fraud or Cozenage; but alass! what a poor Recompence will a little Money be for all that Eternity of Misery, whereunto I shall consign my self by it? Can I carry this sorry Pelf thither with me? Or if I could, can I bribe my Flames, or corrupt my Tormentors with it? And shall I for such a trifling momentary Gain, incur such an everlasting Damage? When I have thus answered this Temptation, perhaps immediately after some amorous Object may present it self to court me to the Harlot's Bed: but, O my Soul! will the Pleasures I am promised there compensate the Loss of all that Heaven of immortal Joys, which I shall forfeit by it? And if they will not, as doubtless they will not, shall I be so childish, as for the Pleasures of a Moment to extinguish all my Hope of being pleased for ever? And when thou hast thus baffled this Temptation, perhaps thou mayest be solicited anew with some importunate Invitation to Intemperance; but, O my Soul! remember the bitter Agonies that thy Saviour endured upon the Score of thy Sins; how this among the rest filled his deadly Cup, and vomited it full of Gall and Vinegar; and can I be so senseless as to make light of any Sin, the Guilt whereof was so heavy as to crush the Lord of Life into his Grave? Shall I be so disingenuous as to gratifie any Lust, that had a Hand in the Murder of my dearest Saviour, my Saviour who loves me a thousand times better than I love my self? And now no sooner hast thou repulsed this Temptation, but perhaps some other may assault thee; thou mayst be presented with a favourable Opportunity of treating thy Lusts so privately and securely, as that no Eye shall discover thee; and then how difficult will it be for thee to refuse such an inviting Occasion: But consider, O my Soul! thou art always and every where under the Inspection of thy Judge, by whose righteous Doom thou must stand or fall for ever; and he that sees what thou dost in private will one Day call thee to account, and openly unmask all thy Actions, and present them bare-fac'd upon the publick Theatre before all the World of Spirits: Unless therefore thou couldst find a Place to be wicked in where God might not see thee, 'tis in vain to promise thy self Coverts and Retirements; for he will one Day bring to light all thy Deeds of Darkness, and display thy Shame to the open View of the World:* Would we, I say, but take the Pains every Morning before we enter into the World, to *season* and *antidote* our Souls with such *Meditations* as these, it would doubtless mightily contribute to the *Mortification* of our Lusts. For this would make the Arguments of our Religion so *familiar* to us, that no *Temptations* whatsoever would be able to baffle our *Resolutions*; which being back'd with such a strength of *Reason*, would stand like a Rock of *Adamant*, out-braving the Fury of those Waves that dash them-

ſelves againſt it, and forcing them to retire after all their threatning Rage in empty and inſignificant Foams. For what *Temptation* can be too hard for that Soul, that is armed with the Hope of *Heaven* and the Fear of *Hell*; and is furniſhed with Arguments from all the Quarters of *Reaſon* and *Religion*, to oppoſe againſt it? This therefore is another of thoſe *Means* and *Inſtruments*, by which we are to *mortifie* our Luſts, *viz.* a ſerious Conſideration of the *Motives* and *Arguments* whereby we are to oppoſe them.

III. Another *Inſtrument* of *Mortification* is a hearty and well-grounded *Reſolution*; and indeed without a *firm Reſolution* it is in vain for us to attempt the *mortifying* of our Luſts, or any *difficult* Undertaking whatſoever. For there is a wide Diſtance between *Thoughts* and *Things*, and 'tis much eaſier to *diſcourſe* of Things than to paſs them into *Execution*; for *clear Reaſonings* are accompanied with a wonderful Delight, becauſe there we engage only with *Deſigns*; and fighting only with the *Idea's* of Things, they will eaſily ſuffer themſelves to be conquered by us, and taken captive at our Will; but when we paſs into *Practice*, that will revolt and oppoſe us in the *Execution*, which was ſo very compliant to the *Thought* and *Meditation*; then you will find that you muſt *wreſtle* ſtoutly with thoſe *Difficulties* that will make Head againſt you, and that theſe will put you to a greater Proof of your *Valour* and Conſtancy than ever you did imagine; ſo that unleſs you are armed with a great Strength of *Reſolution*, you will be beaten off at the firſt Attempt, and meeting with greater *Reſiſtance* than you expected, be forced upon a baſe and cowardly *Retreat*. Now to form a firm *Reſolution* requires a great deal of *Prudence* and good *Conduct*; for it is of a great Avail in all Caſes to *begin well*; and as a Foundation well laid doth ſecure the Superſtructure, ſo a *Reſolution* well form'd will render the *Execution* of what we are to do a great deal more eaſie and feaſible. Before we do reſolve therefore on *mortifying* our *Luſts*, let us be ſure to make uſe of the former *Inſtrument* of *Mortification*; that is, let us acquaint our ſelves with all thoſe mighty Arguments againſt Sin, wherewith either our *Reaſon* or *Religion* can furniſh us; and let us conſider them over and over, till they are *familiar* to our Underſtandings, and our *Thoughts* have extracted the *utmoſt Force* of them; for which End it will be neceſſary for us to ſeek Direction from our *Spiritual Guides*. Then let us ſeriouſly conſider with our ſelves, *what* it is that we are about to do, what *Vices* we muſt divorce, and what *Virtues* we muſt eſpouſe; and let us thoroughly inform our ſelves beforehand of all the foul *Ways*, and ſteep *Aſcents*, and dangerous *Precipices* that are in the Road of our Duty; and then as you go along in your Meditations, aſk your own Hearts whether there be any Paſſage that they *ſtartle* at, or whether notwithſtanding all, they are *ſeriouſly willing* you ſhould go on? Remonſtrate to your own Souls, that in ſuch a Place your *Luſt* will be tempting you with the *genial* Pleaſures of an *adulterous Bed*, and deſire them to deal *plainly* with you whether they can be deaf to thoſe *bewitching Invitations*; tell them that before you have gone many Paces farther, the Wants of *poorer Men* than your ſelves will be ſolliciting your *Charity*, and deſire to know of them whether they are willing you ſhould *do good* and *truſt God* for a Repayment; repreſent to them how highly you may be *provoked* at the next Step by the *injurious* Carriage of ſome inſolent *Adverſary*, and know of them whether they are willing to *contain* their ſavage *Paſſions* within the Bars of *Reaſon* and *Sobriety*; and ſo go on in your own *Thoughts* through all the Paths of your *Duty*, and never ceaſe putting theſe and ſuch like *Queſtions* diſtinctly to your own Souls, till they give an *expreſs Conſent* to every *Duty* that preſſes for a Reſolution. And it will very much conduce to the ſettling of a *fixed Judgment* in you, if you do not conclude too *ſoon*, but *weigh* all theſe Things over again; if you would aſk your ſelves the next Morning, whether you ſtill *continue* of the ſame Mind, and

whether your former *Consent* was not the Effect of a *present Heat*, or whether now after the Cool of the Night you do *still allow* of it; for in all probability if you *resolve* in Haste, you will repent at Leisure. And this, I doubt not, is the Bane of most of our good *Resolutions*, that generally they are the Effects of some *transitory Passion*, and not of a *sober Judgment* and *serious Deliberation*; for when Men resolve well in Heats of *Passion*, they resolve to do they know not what themselves, but swallow their Religion by the *Lump*, without considering the *Particulars* of it; and so they do by their *Duty*, as Men do with bitter *Pills*, which they can swallow *whole*, but when they come to *chew*, those prove so distasteful, that presently they spit them out again. When therefore you have calmly *considered* with your selves all the *Arguments* against your Sins, and all the *Difficulties* of forsaking them, and you have *reason'd* your Wills into an *express Consent* to part with them for ever; then betake your selves to your bended Knees, and in the most solemn Manner devote your selves unto God: *O Lord, I acknowledge, I have been a great Offender against thee, and that my past Life has been nothing else but a continued Rebellion; but now I see my Folly, and am ashamed to think what a notorious Offender I have been; wherefore here I solemnly promise in thy dreadful Presence, and in the Presence of all thy holy Angels, that where-ever I have done amiss, I will do so no more; be Witness, O thou righteous Judge of the World, that here I shake Hands with all my darling Lusts, and bid them adieu for ever; wherefore be gone ye Soul-destroying Vipers, that have twined so long about me; away, ye wretched Idols, whom I have too long adored; for in the Name of God I am fully resolved never to entertain you more.* And now having reduced our selves to a *good Resolution* of Mind, our greatest Difficulty is over; for so long as we keep our *Resolution*, we are *invincible*, and all the Powers of *Hell* will not be able to *prevail* against us. For our Wills are not to be *forced* by any Power whatsoever, and there is no *Temptation* in the World can make us *return* to our *Sin*, so long as we are heartily *resolved* against it; so that all we have now to do is to keep the Ground we have gotten, and not to suffer our *spiritual Enemies* to batter down those *good Resolutions* we have raised against them, which if we can but maintain will infallibly secure us against all their *Power* and *Malice*.

IV. Another *Instrument* of *Mortification* is a wise and prudent *Discipline*. When by *Consideration* we have brought our selves to a thorough *Resolution* of Amendment, then to *confirm* and *secure* our Resolution, there are sundry wise and prudent *Methods* to be used; as *First*, a frequent *Repetition* and *Renewal* of it. For at first our *vicious Inclinations* will muster up all their Strength against our *Resolution*, and a *perpetual Contest* there will be between them, till either the one or the other is *subdued*: But our good *Resolution* being yet but *raw* and *infirm*, will ever and anon be apt to *flinch* and *retreat*; so that unless we often *renew* and *reinforce* it, it will not long be able to withstand the Assaults and Importunities of our *vicious Inclinations*. Wherefore if we mean to be *successful* in this Work of *Mortification*, it will be necessary, for some Time at least till the Strength of our *bad Inclinations* is broken, that we should every Morning before we go abroad into the World *renew* our *Vows* and *Resolutions* of Obedience, and *reinforce* them with a *serious Consideration* of those great Arguments whereupon they were first founded; that we should go out of our Chambers *armed* as Men that wait for their Enemies, and not *trust* our own Souls among the *Temptations* of the World, till we have first *chained* up our Inclinations with *new Vows* of Fidelity. Let us therefore every Day as soon as we open our Eyes thus resolve with our selves; *I am now going into a World of Temptations, where I shall be solicited both from within and without to falsify my Vows which I have made to my God, and to betray my own Soul into everlasting Perdition; wherefore I do here in the*

dreadful Presence of God, and of my Saviour, and of all the heavenly Host, renew and ratify again the good Resolutions I have made, without any reservation or exception; and whatsoever Invitations I may have to the contrary, I will never revoke this promise which I now make, or any part of it: So help me, O my God. And if for a while we would but *use* our selves to this *Method*, I doubt not but we should quickly find our good *Resolutions* so *strengthen'd* and *confirm'd*, that the Gates of Hell would not be able to *prevail* against them; but if when we have made a *Resolution* against our Sins, we do not take care to *confirm* and *renew* it, we shall find the *Strength* of it will by degrees so *decay* and *abate*, that at last it will be *foiled* and *baffled* by every Temptation that encounters it. This therefore is *one* Part of that wise and prudent *Discipline* we are to exercise over our selves, when we are throughly resolved against our Sin, frequently to *renew* our Resolution.

II. Another Part of it is frequent *Reflection* upon and *Examination* of our selves. And indeed if we do not *inure* our selves to *this*, we shall very often sin *unawares* without either *considering* what we are *doing*, or *reflecting* upon what we have *done*; and while we can thus sin without *Check* or *Controul*, it will be in *vain* for us to make *Resolutions* of Obedience. For still the *Pleasure* of *one* Act will invite us to *another*, and so in the Hurry of our worldly Occasions, we shall go on to *repeat* Sin after Sin, without *heeding* what we do, or *repenting* of what we have done; and if we suffer *one* Sin to break through the Fence, that will open a Gap for *others*, to follow; and if *these* are not presently *stopp'd* by serious *Reflection*, they will make the Breach yet wider for *others*; till at last they have trodden down all the *Enclosures* of our Resolution, and laid open our whole Souls into a *Common*, and *Thorough-fare* of Iniquity. But now by *inuring* our selves to a frequent *Reflection* upon, and *Examination* of our own Actions, we shall in a great measure prevent those many *Surprizes* which otherwise will be unavoidable to us; and when at any Time we stumble at unawares, the *Penance* we shall undergo in reflecting upon our Fault will so *embitter* the *Pleasure* of it, as to render it incapable of seducing us again. Wherefore to secure the *Mortification* of our Sins, as it is necessary that every Morning we should *renew* our Resolution against it, so it is no less requisite that every Night (especially till we have made some considerable Progress) we should seriously examine our *Performances*, whether they have comported with our *Resolutions*; and if upon an *impartial* Survey of our own Actions we find that they *have*, let us lie down in Peace, blessing and adoring that *Grace* by which we have been preserved. But if we are conscious to our selves of any *Breach* that we have made upon our *Morning Vows* of Obedience, let us bitterly bewail our own *Folly* and *Baseness*, and reflect upon it with the greatest Shame and Indignation: *What have I done, O wretched Traytor that I am, both to God and my own Soul? I have mocked the great Majesty of Heaven, with solemn Vows of Obedience, and broke the most sacred Ties to come at those Lusts which will be my Ruin; what can I plead for my self, base and unworthy that I am? With what Face can I go into his dreadful Presence, whom I so lately invoked to be Witness to those Vows which I have this Day falsified? Yet go I will, though I am all ashamed and confounded, and confess and bewail mine Iniquity before him.* And if we would but keep our selves a while to this strict *Discipline*, we cannot imagine how mightily it would contribute to the *Mortification* of our Lusts; it would make our Reason so *vigilant*, and our Conscience so *tender*, that in a little while we should be startled with every *Appearance of Evil*; and *Death* it self would not be so terrible, as *Sin* to us; the *Pleasure* of our Sin would be so allayed and abated by those *stinging Reflections* that would follow upon it, that it would be no longer capable of *alluring* and *seducing*

us;

us; and the Dread of that bitter *Penance*, which we must undergo at Night, would sufficiently secure us against the *Temptations* of the Day.

Thirdly and *lastly*, another Part of that prudent *Discipline* which we are to exercise upon our selves, is to keep our selves at as great a *Distance* from Sin, as *prudently* and *conveniently* we can. He that will *mortifie* his Sin, must at first not only *abstain* from *sinning*, but also from every thing that doth nearly *approach* and *border* upon it; as for instance, it is not sufficient to *mortifie* an intemperate *Appetite*, that we abstain from *Drunkenness* and *Gluttony*; but besides this, we must for a while at least be very *abstemious* till we have *reduced* our Appetite from its wild *Exorbitances*, and not *indulge* to our selves the utmost Liberties of *lawful* Eating and Drinking: it is not sufficient for the *subduing* our wanton *Inclinations*, that we abstain from *Adultery* and *Fornication*; but we must also forbear those *Meats* and *Drinks*, those *Gestures* and *Societies*, those *Sights* and *Sports* which are apt to administer *Fuel* to our *immodest Flames*: to *tame* our malicious and revengeful *Passions*; it is not enough that we abstain from all *unjust Retalliations* of Injuries; but we must moreover restrain our selves even from that *lawful* Displeasure and *just* Resentment which may safely be allowed to a meek and charitable Disposition. And under these strict *Restraints* we must keep our selves for a while, till we have *worn* off our evil *Inclinations*, by *habituating* our selves to the contrary *Vertues*; and then we may safely *unloose* our Bands, and return again to our *lawful* Freedoms. But if while we are *strongly inclined* to any Sin, we will venture as *near* to it as *lawfully* we may, it is a mighty *Hazard* but our *Inclination* will carry us a great deal *farther* than we should go. For generally the Transition out of the *utmost* of what is *lawful* into the *nearmost* of what is *sinful*, is undiscernable; the κανὼν or *Line* that meets out a *Vertue* from its neighbouring *Vice* being commonly so *small*, that it is hard to *distinguish* where they part, or to find out the just *Boundary* whereto we may go and *no farther*; so that when we think we are only upon the Extremities of what is *lawful*, we are many times passed the Line, and are far gone within the Borders of what is *sinful*. So that unless we had an *infallible Guide* to accompany us in all our Actions and Circumstances, and to point out to us the particular *Limits* of *Lawful* and *Unlawful*; it is impossible we should be safe within the *Neighbourhood* of Evil; but like those who dwell upon the *Confines* of two hostile Countries, we shall still lie open to *Invasion* on every Side. For our bad Inclinations are never so *impatient* of *Restraint*, as when they are within *Prospect* of *Satisfaction*, and the Objects which attract them are *near* and *easie* to be enjoy'd; now they will *struggle* with all their *Might* against our Resolution, and taking a *new Scent* of those beloved Lusts whose alluring Relishes they had almost forgotten, with all the Ties of *Conscience* we shall hardly be *able* to withhold them from following the *beloved Game*. So that unless we keep our selves at a convenient *Distance* from *Sin*, our bad *Inclinations* will be always within *View* of Temptation; which the *nearer* it is, the more it will *court* and *importune* them; and while we keep *near* our Sin, and do not enjoy it, we do but *tantalize* our selves, and *enrage* our own Hunger by seeing a *Bait* before us which we *dare* not swallow. If ever therefore we mean to *mortifie* our *Lusts*, we must not only avoid *coming* at them; but so far as we can, *approaching* towards them: at least till we have so *weaned* our Inclination from them, that their *Nearness* ceases to be a *Temptation* to us. These are the Parts of that wise and prudent *Discipline*, which we are to exercise upon our selves, as a *Mean* and *Instrument* to *mortifie* our Lust.

V. Another

V. Another *Instrument* of *Mortification* is frequent receiving of the *Sacrament*. And indeed I do not know any one more effectual *Cause*, or more fatal *Symptom* of the *Decay* of *Christian Piety* among us, than is the common and woeful Neglect of this *solemn Ordinance*, which, were it but *frequented* with that *wise* and *due* Preparation that it ought to be, would doubtless be highly *instrumental* to *reform* the World, and to make Men *good* in good earnest. For, besides that those sacred Elements are by *God's Institution* become *moral* Conveyances of the *divine Grace*, whereby our good Resolutions are *nourish'd* and *confirm'd*; there we have represented openly to our *Senses* one of the greatest Arguments against Sin in all our Religion, *viz.* the *Passion* and *Sacrifice* of our blessed Saviour: There he is represented to my Eyes in all his *Wounds* and *Agonies*, bruised and broken for my Sin, and bleeding to expiate my Transgressions. And, *O my obdurate Soul, canst thou behold this tragical Spectacle, without Indignation against thy Sins which were the Cause of it? Does not thy Heart rise against thy Sins, whilst thou here beholdest him weltering in his Blood, and hearest those gaping Wounds it issues from, proclaiming them his Assassines and Murderers? But if thou hast not Ingenuity enough to prompt thee to revenge thy Saviour's Quarrel upon these his mortal Enemies, yet methinks Self-love would move thee not to be fond of thy Sins, when thou here beholdest how much the Son of God endured to expiate them. For how canst thou think of sinning without Trembling and Astonishment, who hast here before thine Eye such a dreadful Example of God's Severity against it? Does it not strike thy Soul into an Agony to behold this bloody Tragedy, wherein the all-merciful Father is represented so inexorably incensed against thy Sins, that he that was the most innocent Person that ever was upon Earth, and also the greatest Favourite that ever was in Heaven, could not with all his Prayers and Tears obtain thy Pardon, without undergoing for thee the bitter Agonies of a woeful Death? Sure if thou hast any one Spark of Love in thee either towards thy Saviour or thy self, this solemn Commemoration of his Passion cannot but affect thee with Horror and Indignation against thy Sins.* But then as in this great Solemnity we do *commemorate* our Saviour's Passion, so we do also *renew* the *Vows* of our Obedience to him; which (as I have shewed you) is very *instrumental* in it self to the subduing of our Sins; but much more, when it is done in so *sacred* a manner. For as Feasting upon Sacrifice was always used as a *federal* Rite, both among the *Jews*, and *Heathens*, whereby God and Men by *eating* together did *mutually* oblige themselves to one another; so the *Lord's Supper* being a Feast upon the Sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood, when we come thither we *eat* and *drink* of his Sacrifice, and do thereby *devote* ourselves in the most solemn Manner to his Service: We swear *Allegiance* to him upon his own Body and Blood, and take the *Sacrament* upon it, that we will be his *faithful Votaries.* When we take the consecrated Symbols into our Hands, we make this solemn *Dedication* of ourselves to God; *Here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our Selves, our Souls and Bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and lively Sacrifice unto thee, and here we call to witness this sacred Blood that redeemed us, and those vocal Wounds that interceded for us, that from henceforth we oblige our Selves never to start from thy Service, what Difficulties soever we may encounter in it, and what Temptations soever we may have to forsake it.* Now what can be a greater *Restraint* to us, when we are solicited to any Evil, than such a *solemn* and *sacred* Obligation? Methinks the Sense of that *dreadful Vow* that is upon us, should so overawe us, that we should not be able to *think* of *sinning* without Horror: *For, Lord! how shall I dare to cheat and defraud my Neighbour, when 'twas but the other Day that I vowed to be honest, and took the Sacrament upon it? With what Conscience can I now hate or design Revenge against my Brother, when I so lately swore unto God upon the Body and Blood of my Saviour, that I would love and forgive all the World?* Surely if Men had any Sense of *God*, any

Dram of *Religion* in them, they would not be able after such *Engagements* to *look* upon any Temptation to Sin without *Trembling:* and whatsoever Pretences of *Unworthiness* Men may make to keep themselves from this *Ordinance*, I doubt not but the great *Reason* of their Neglect is this, that they love their *Lusts*, and are resolved whatsoever comes of it they will not part with them; and so they will not *come* to the *Sacrament*, because they must be obliged to *renounce* their *Lusts* there, which they are extremely unwilling to do. And if this be their *Reason*, as I fear it is, they are *unworthy* indeed, the more Shame for them; but it is such an *Unworthiness* as is so far from *excusing* their Neglect, that it is a foul *Aggravation* of it: For he that will not *receive* the *Sacrament*, because he will not *renounce* his *Lusts*, makes *one* Sin the Reason of *another*, and so pleads that for his *Excuse* which will be the Cause of his *Condemnation.* But if we are honestly resolved to *part* with all our Sins, and can but willingly *devote* them as Sacrifices to the *Altar*, we are sufficiently *prepared* for this great Solemnity, and shall be *welcome Guests* to the Table of our Lord: If we can *sincerely* pay our Vows at his Altar, we may *confidently* take the *Cup of Salvation and call upon the Name of the Lord.* And having thus *chained* up our *Lusts* by the *Vows* of Obedience we have paid there, it will be hard for them to shake off such *mighty Fetters*, or ever to get loose again from so *strict* a *Confinement*; especially if we take care to *repeat* this our *Sacramental Vow* as often as conveniently we can. For (as I have already shewed you) the *frequent Renewal* of our holy Vows and Resolutions does mightily tend to *strengthen* and *re-inforce* them: And therefore it is worth observing, how much Care Christ hath taken in the very *Constitution* of his Religion, to oblige us to a constant *Repetition* of our Vows and good Purposes. For at our first *Entrance* into Covenant with him, we are to be *baptized*; in which Solemnity we do *renounce* the Devil and all his Works, and religiously *devote* our selves to his Service: But because we are apt to *forget* our Vow, and the Matter of it is *continually* to be performed, and more than one World doth depend upon it; therefore he hath thought fit not to trust to our first *Engagement*, but so to methodize our Religion that we should ever and anon be obliged to give him *new Security.* For which End he hath instituted this *other Sacrament*, which is not like that of *Baptism* to be received by us once for all, but is to be often *repeated*; that so at every *Return* of it we might be obliged again to *renew* our old Vows of Obedience: And doubtless would we but follow this good Design of our *Saviour*, we should be far more successful in our *Religion* than we are. For till we come to a *confirm'd* State of Goodness, our holy Fervour will be very apt to *cool*, our good Purposes to *slacken* and *unwind*, and our virtuous Endeavours to *languish* and grow *weary:* So that unless we *revive* our Religion by frequent *Restoratives*, in a little Time it will *faint*, and die away. Wherefore to keep it *alive*, it is very necessary that we should come to our great Master's Table every Time we are invited by the solemn Returns of this *holy Festival*; that here we may *renew* our Vows, and *re-invigorate* our Resolutions, and *repair* our Decays, and put our sluggish Graces into a *new Fermentation:* And if we would thus *frequently* communicate with a due *Preparation* of Mind, we should doubtless at every Sacrament acquire *new* Life and Vigour, and our *good Resolutions* would every Day get Ground of our *bad Inclinations*, till at last they had totally *subdued* them.

VI. And *lastly*, Another *Instrument* of *Mortification* is *constant Prayer.* For besides, that by our *sincere* and *honest Prayers* we are sure to obtain *Strength* and *Assistance* from God, to enable us to vanquish and subdue

our Lusts, he having *promised* to give his Holy Spirit unto every one that *asketh* it: Besides this, I say, by a *constant* and *serious* Devotion our Hearts will be filled with such an *over-awing* Sense of God, that in all our Actions we shall *dread* and *revere* his Authority, and be ready to *tremble* at every Thought of offending him. For there is nothing gives us such a *quick* Sense of God, as *Prayer*; that being the most *immediate Address* that we can make to him, and the *highest Elevation* of our Souls towards him. For we are a Sort of Beings that are a-kin to *two* Worlds, being placed in the Middle between *Heaven* and *Earth*, as the common *Center* wherein these distant Regions meet. By our *superiour* Faculties we hold Communion with the *spiritual* World, and by our *inferiour* with the *corporeal* one: But to this *sensible* or *corporeal* World we lie *open* and *bare*, all its Objects being *present* to us, and striking *immediately* on our Senses; whereas between us and the *spiritual* World there is a Cloud of *sensible* Things, which *interrupts* our Prospect of the clear Heaven above them; so that before we can perceive that which is *Divine*, we must remove *this World* out of the way, and withdraw our *Souls* from those *Thoughts* and *Desires* wherein these *lower* Things have entangled them; that so we may lie open to the *Heavenly* Light, and our *cold* Affections may be immediately exposed to the *enlivening* Warmths of the *Sun* of *Righteousness*. And hence arises the Necessity of holy *Meditations* and devout *Prayers*; the one being necessary to *abstract* our Minds from the Objects of *corporeal* Sense, and the other to *inspire* our Wills with *divine* Affections and Inclinations: For *Meditation* furnishes our *Understandings* with noble Thoughts and Heavenly Ideas; and Prayer carries out our *Wills* to the Love of them, and joyns our *Affections* fast to them; so that by the *one* we are tied in our *Minds*, and by the *other* in our *Choice* to the better World. For *Prayer* does naturally *sublimate* our gross, and earthly *Passions*; and by keeping our Minds intent upon *God*, it wings our Affections towards *him*, and animates them with *Divine* Fires: And we do never rise from our Knees after a *devout* Address unto God, without deriving a *magnetick* Vertue from him, and being *sensibly* touched with his *Charms* and *Attractions*. So that if we did but inure our selves to *fervent Prayer*, those holy *Affections* which we should suck in with our *Devotions* would be instrumental to *extinguish* our vicious *Inclinations*; and we should go every Day from the Throne of Grace with such a *lively* Sense of *God*, and such a *vigorous* Relish of *divine* Things, as would be sufficient to *antidote* us all the Day after against the Venom of any *sinful Contagion*. Wherefore if we are in good *earnest*, and do *seriously* intend the *Mortification* of our Lusts, let us every Day before we go into the World be *seasoning* of our Minds with *holy Devotions*; and while we are *addressing* unto God in the deepest Sense of his unbounded *Perfections*, and of our own *Dependence* upon him, let us pour out our *Souls* before him, and make an hearty Oblation of our *Souls* and *Bodies* to him. Let us offer up our *Wills* to him *broken* and *contrite*, that he may put them into what *Form* and *Posture* he pleases; shew him an Heart that quitteth all Interest in *it self*, and that would be only led and conducted by *him*; tell him that you are sensible, that to *mortify* your Lusts is far more difficult than to *resolve* to do it; and beseech him to *enable* you to be valiant in your *Actions*; as through his Grace you are already in your *Minds* and Hearts; that you may with as much *Certainty*, if not with as much *Ease*, *do* and *effect*, as you have *projected* and *resolved*. And having thus implored *his* Aid, and sincerely offered up your selves unto *him*, you have laid a strong *Engagement* upon him not to abandon you: For to be sure he will not *throw* away a Heart, that puts it self thus *humbly* into his Hands; nor suffer the *De-*

vil to make a *Prey* of that which hath been ſo affectionately *devoted* to him. For it was by the Concurrence of *his Grace*, with our *own Faculties*, that this Reſolution of *Submiſſion* to him was *begotten* in us; and can we think that the *Father* of *Love* will ever *abandon* his own *Offſpring*, while it *crys* out to him, and with pitiful and bemoaning Looks *implores* his Aid and Compaſſion? Surely this cannot chooſe but *move* his *Fatherly* Bowels, and make them *yearn* and *turn* towards it, and by a ſtrong Sympathy draw his *compaſſionate* Arm to *aid* and *relieve* it. Let us therefore but faithfully uſe our own *Endeavours*, and fervently implore *God*'s Grace; and then to be ſure he will never ſuffer that *divine Fire* which he hath *kindled* within us, to be *over-born* by our *Corruptions*; but will kindly cheriſh it with his own *Influence*, and touch it with an out-ſtretched *Ray* from himſelf, till it hath burned through all that Rubbiſh that oppreſſes it, and till it riſes into a *victorious Flame*.

Chap. III.

Of ſome Motives *to* Mortification, *taken from the Miſchiefs of Sin.*

HAving ſhewn you at large what are the proper *Inſtruments* of *Mortification*, I ſhall in the next place proceed to preſs you with ſome prevailing *Motives* and *Arguments* faithfully to employ and uſe them. And here I ſhall not inſiſt upon thoſe *Arguments* which ariſe from the Conſideration of the *future State*, becauſe *theſe* will fall in hereafter, when I come to diſcourſe upon *it*: All the Arguments that I ſhall here urge therefore to preſs you to *mortify* your Sins, ſhall be drawn from the Conſideration of thoſe *preſent Miſeries* and *Inconveniencies* which they bring you into. And theſe I ſhall rank under two general Heads:

Firſt, Such as are *outward* and *Bodily*.
Secondly, Such as are *inward* and *Spiritual*.

I. The *outward* and *Bodily Inconveniencies* which our Sins bring upon us are chiefly theſe Four;

Firſt, They deſtroy our *Health* and ſhorten our *Lives*.
Secondly, they ſtain our *Reputation*.
Thirdly, They waſte our *Eſtates*.
Fourthly, They diſturb even our *ſenſual Pleaſures* and *Delights*,

I. Conſider how your Sins deſtroy your *Health* and ſhorten your *Lives*. And to convince you of this, I need do no more than only to lead you into the *Slaughter-houſes* of Death, and to ſhew you how *thick* they are hung round about with the numerous Trophies of *Luſt* and *Intemperance:* Behold, there lieth an *Adulterer* choaked with the Stench of his own Rottenneſs; there a *Drunkard* fettered with Gouts, and drowned in Catarrhes and Dropſies; there a *Glutton* ſtifled with the Loads of

of his own undigested Meals; loe there lye the dismembred Martyrs of *Revenge* and *Insolence*, that have lost their Limbs upon the Field in a foolish Quarrel for *Vanity* and *Mistresses*; and there the Envoys of *Rapine* and *Murder*, whose infamous Carkasses have furnished the *Scaffolds* and the *Gallows*. These and such like woful *Examples* almost every Day's *Experience* presents to our View, which one would think were *sufficient* to warn Men of those *Vices*, which they so commonly find attended with such *tragical Effects*: And indeed there is no *Vice* whatsoever, but does one way or other undermine our *Health*, and impair the *Strengths* of Nature For all *Viciousness* consists in an *Excess* either of our *Passions*, or our *Appetites*; and it is plain and obvious, how destructive to our *Health* the wild *Excesses* of our *Appetites* are: How naturally *Wantonness* doth *melt* our Strength, *consume* our Spirits, and *rot* our Bones: How *Gluttony* obstructs our Breath, oppresses our Stomachs, and drowns our Bodies in *unwholsome Crudities*: How *Drunkenness* inflames our Livers, corrupts our Blood, dilutes our Brains, and converts us into walking Hospitals of *Diseases*. And as for the *Excesses* of our *Passion*, it is no less apparent how much they *disturb* and *discompose* our Natures: Thus *Anger* we see fires the Spirits and inflames the Blood, and makes the Humours sharp and corroding: Thus *immoderate Sorrow* oppresses the Heart, dries the Bones, shrivels the Skin, and overcasts the Spirits with Clouds of *Melancholy*: Thus *Envy* swells the Hypocondries, which by drinking up the Nourishment of the neighbouring Parts, makes the whole Body *lean* and *meager*: And in a Word, thus *excessive Fear* stagnates the flowing Spirits, and turns the Blood into a *trembling Jelly*. And such *Disorders* as these, when they are frequent, must needs gradually *undermine* the Forts of Life, and hasten them into an *untimely Ruine*. Now is it not very strange, that those Men who are commonly so *over tender* of their *Lives*, should be *fond* of *Diseases*, and *court* their own *Executioners*? That they should *chuse* to swallow *Sicknesses*, and to drink dead *Palsies*, and foaming *Epilepsies*, and to pass through so severe a Discipline of *Torments*, only to get an Habit of *destroying* themselves? 'Tis true indeed, some there are that have been so *naturalized* to their *Vices*, that they cannot *live*, nor be *well* without them; that are *sick* while they are *temperate*, and are not able to sleep, but in a Sea of Liquor, and are fain to put themselves into *Excesses* of *Passion* to *ferment* their Blood, and *rouze* their drousy Spirits: But then it is to be considered, that generally they bring themselves into this sad Pass by their own evil *Habits* and *Customs* which they acquire, by doing great *Violence* to themselves, and committing forcible *Outrages* on their own Natures. There is no *unreasonable Passion*, or *Appetite* can be *necessary* to our *Health*, or *Ease*, till we are first *habituated* to them; and before we can be *habituated*, we must undergo a tedious *Course* of Pain and Uneasiness; many a Fit of *tormenting Rage* must be endured; many an uneasy Draught and sickly Qualm and fainting Sweat must be undergone, before *Wrath* and *Intemperance* can be made *easie* and *pleasant* to us; and much more before they become *necessary* Remedies: And it is rare, if ever we have need of these Excesses, till by a long *Course* of Violence upon our selves we have first over-turn'd our natural *Temper* and *Constitution*. And what Man in his Wits would ever swallow *Poyson*, merely to *force* his Nature into a *Reconciliation* with it; when he is sure beforehand, that if he doth not *die* in the *Experiment*, (as 'tis a great Chance but he doth) yet that he must undergo many a *Sickness* and bitter *Agony*, before his Nature is so *accustomed* to it as to be *preserved* and *nourished* by it? But alas! by that time we are arrived to that Pitch of *Intemperance*,

rance, as to be drunk without the Penance of a *Surfeit* or a *Fever*, the Heat and Vigour of our Nature is usually so *quenched* with crude Humours, our Spirits so *drowned* in Rheums, and Dropsies, and our Brains so *drenched* in Clouds of unwholsome Moisture, that all our Life after we are but so many *walking Statues* of Earth and Flegme; and having washed away all the Principles of *Reason* and *Discretion* in us, we grow old in *Folly* and *Sottishness*, and at the last die *Changelings*. Thus Sin you see, is a *Disease* to the *Body*; it wasts our *Strength*, and either makes the *Candle* of our Life to burn *dim*, or *blazes* it out into an untimely Period. Why then should we not be as earnest in the Cure of *this*, as we are of our *other Diseases?* For doubtless would we but as carefully apply the Means and Instruments of *Mortification*, as we do, when we are sick of a Feaver or an Ague, the proper Remedies against them; we should quickly cure those *Excesses* of our Passions, and Appetites, which do so *disease* our Bodies, and *disturb* our Natures.

II. Consider how your Sins do stain and blemish your *Reputation*. For there is nothing in the whole World more *natural* to Men, than to *admire* Virtue and *disesteem* Vice wheresoever they find it: This we seem to do by a *natural Instinct*, antecedently to all our *Reasoning* and *Discourse*; and it is no more in our *Power* not to do it, than it is to chuse whether our Pulse shall beat, or our Blood circulate. For that Virtue is an *Ornament*, and Vice a *Deformity* to humane Nature, is a Proposition so *self-evident*, that at the first Proposal it commands the Assent of all *Rational Beings*; nor is it in any Man's Power so far to offer *Violence* to his own Faculties, as to believe Vice *praise-worthy*, or *commendable*, any more than it is to believe *that* to be *white* and *straight*, which he sees to be *black* and *crooked:* And accordingly you will find, that by all Mankind it hath ever been branded with an *infamous* Character, and looked on as a *Disparagement* to the noblest Accomplishments. For in all the Monuments of former Ages, never were any Man's *Lusts* and *Intemperances* recorded among the Titles of his *Honour*; nor was there ever any one canonized in the Records of *Fame*, for being a *Villain*, or a great *Debauchée*. But generally they are the *Wise*, or the *Valiant*, the *Just*, or the *Merciful*, the *Chaste*, or the *Liberal*, whose Names have been *consecrated* in History; and no Man ever acquired a glorious Memory, but it was either by being *virtuous*, or by seeming to be so. And though wicked Men, like Glow-worms, do sometimes shine in the Dark, where either their Vice is not *seen*, or is *mistaken* for Virtue; yet usually at the Approach either of *Time*, or *Light*, their *Lustre* vanishes and goes out in *Stink* and *Dishonour*. So that methinks had we any Regard to our own *Reputation*, we should *scorn* to harbour those *infamous* Lusts, which in the Opinion of all the World are so great *Disparagements* to us: For what a monstrous *Shame* is it to be despised by all *wise* Men, to be hooted at by *Boys*, to be talked of in Fairs and Markets, and pointed at and described by Appellatives of *Scorn?* And yet all this we expose our selves to for the sake of a few *base Lusts*, which cause us to *rot* above ground and to *stink* alive, and when we are dead will strew our Graves with *Dishonour*, and inroll our Names in the black Records of *Infamy*.

III. Consider how your Vices do waste and consume your *Estates*. For generally it is a very *chargeable* Thing to be *wicked*, there being few *Lusts* but do require a large *Revenue* to maintain them: For what a vast *Expence* is the *Epicure* at to provide Meat and Drink-Offerings for that

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Idol God his *Belly?* What an inestimable *Charge* is it to the prodigal *ostentatious Fool* to gratify all his Vanities, and plume the Wings of his *fantastick Pride?* How much does it cost the *insatiate Wanton* to make Provision for his unbounded *Sensuality?* How many a fair Estate hath there been spent in *litigious Suits* at Law, merely to improve a Quarrel, and gratify a silly Revenge? And how many a prosperous Trader hath undermined himself by his own *Fraud* and *Knavery*; whilst for a present *dishonest Gain* he loses a Customer, by whom he might have honestly gotten ten times more in seven Years Trade and Commerce? And indeed for the generality there is a World of *ill Husbandry* in being *wicked*; most of our *Lusts* being like the Holes of a *Sieve*, through which our Estate runs out as fast as we can pour it in: And I believe it were easy to demonstrate, that the *Ruin* of most Families, and the *Beggary* of most Persons, is owing to one *Vice* or other; and that where one is sunk by mere *Misfortune*, there are twenty ruined by their own *Wickedness.* Now what Man in his Wits would keep such a Company of *devouring Lusts* about him, that are perpetually spungeing upon his *Estate*, and eating the Bread out of his *Childrens* Mouths? Who would ever expose *himself* and his *Family* to the hazard of *Want* and *Beggary*, merely to gratify an unreasonable *Passion*, or to satiate a wild and intemperate *Appetite?* But perhaps you think that there is no great Danger of this; for whatever comes of it, you will take care of the *main Chance*, and be such *good Husbands* in your Wickedness, as to be sure not to impair your Estates by it. Alas, poor Men! you know not what you will be; for when once you are set into a *Course* of Wickedness, you are like so many eager *Gamesters*, that when they set to it, resolve to lose but a *Crown*, or a *Piece* at most; but when they have lost that, they double their Stakes in hope to recover all again, and so game on till they have *no more* to lose. And first perhaps your *Lusts* will be very *modest*, and *content* themselves with the cheapest Provisions you can make for them; but when once they have *inveagled* and *drawn* you in, they will still be craving more costly Entertainments, and will by *degrees* so encroach upon you, that you know not when or where you shall stop: So that 'tis in vain for you to talk what you will do, for either you must *mortify* your Lusts, or resolve to *gratify* them; and if you do the latter, there is no End of it; for like the *Daughters of the Horseleech*, they will still be crying *Give, Give*, till you have no more to give, and then they will prey upon *your selves.*

Fourthly and *lastly*, Consider how your *Vices* do disturb and interrupt even your *sensual Pleasures* and *Delights.* For how often do you embroil the *Peace* of your *Families* by your own *peevish Passions*, and disturb the whole *Neighbourhood*, with whom you might enjoy the *Pleasures* of a *friendly* Conversation? How many *Enemies* do you create your selves by your own *Malice* and *Ill Nature*, whom you might as easily oblige by *Kindness* and *Good Will*, at least to a *fair Correspondence*, if not to a *Return* of *mutual Indearments?* To how many *Hazards* and *Difficulties*, *Jealousies* and *Disappointments*, *Impatiences* of Desire and *Fears* of Discovery does *Lasciviousness* expose you? Whenas, would you but *confine* your *vagrant Lusts* within the holy Circles of *Conjugal Chastity*, you might entertain your Appetites with *Innocence* and *Ease*, with *equal Pleasure* and *less Difficulty*, with a *pure Conscience*, and without the Hazard either of *Disappointment* or *Discovery.* How do you *perplex* and *entangle* your selves by *Lying* and *Knavery*, consuming the *Pleasure* of your Lives within a winding Maze of little *Tricks* and intricate *Contrivances?*

And what *shameful* Retreats and false Colours and Daubings are you fain to use to avoid *Contradiction* and *Discovery?* Whereas were you but *honest* and *sincere* in your Professions and Actions, your Way would be *open* and *easy* and *uniform*; where you might pursue all your Ends by the *directest Means*, and need never wander about in the *Labyrinths* of a *mysterious Subtilty*; where you may walk without *blushing* in the Sight of the Sun, and the View of the World, and have no Occasion to *skulk* into *Coverts* and *Retirements*. Once more, What *miserable* Drudges doth *Covetousness* make of us? It will not let us *rest* Day nor Night, but sends us about in *everlasting* Errands; now to be *scorched* in the Southern, anon to be *frozen* in the Northern Parts of the World; this Day it exposes us to be *shipwrecked* at Sea, the next to be *terrified* on Shoar, and all this to get a *great Heap* of Wealth, which when we have gotten, it will not let us *enjoy*: So that when we *have* what we so *impatiently* hungred after, we have only acquired a *greater Necessity*; because before we *needed* only what we had *not*, but now we *need* what we *have* too; our *covetous Desires* luring us off, and not enduring we should *feed* upon our own *Quarry*: And so after all our Toil, we shall *need* as much at least as we did *before*; only *before* we did not *possess* what we *needed*, whereas now we shall *need* what we do *possess*. But did we take the Pains to learn that great Lesson of *Christian Contentment*, we should then pursue the World with far *less Vehemence*, and enjoy it with far *more Freedom*: We should be *industrious* without that eager *Solicitude*, and if it pleased God to bless our Industry, we should neither *waste* what we have, nor *want* it; and many a happy Year we should *enjoy* that which now we consume in vexatious Care to *keep*, and restless Desire to *increase* it. How *unpleasant* is the Life of the *intemperate Epicure*, who lives in a continual *Lethargy*, and dozes away his time in *Sottishness* and *Stupidity*; and by perpetually sucking in *Rheums* and *Defluxions*, doth so *weaken* and *dilute* the Vigour of the Organs of Sense, that he *perceives* not the Briskness of his own *Relishes*; but after his delicious Gobbets are past his Throat, they *load* and *oppress* him, and his *Stomach* is fain to do Penance for the Folly and Extravagance of his *Palate*; and those deep Draughts wherein he seeks to drown his *Conscience* and his *Melancholy*, leave behind them such an *Uneasiness* both in his *Body* and *Mind*, as nothing can reprieve: For as soon as he hath *slept* away the Fumes of his *Intemperance*, he finds himself *sick* as well of *Company* as of *Solitude*, and is fain to endure all the four Regrets both of his *Conscience* and his *Stomach*. Whereas would but this Man *govern* his Appetite by the Laws of *Temperance*; would he eat to *satisfy*, and not to invite his Hunger, and drink to *refresh* and not to *force* and *oppress* himself; his Relish would be *quick* and *vigorous*, his Gust *sincere*, and his Digestion *easy*; and his Appetite being not *overloaded* with the foregoing Meal, would quickly *return* again and give a *pleasing Relish* to his next Morsel: When he rose from his Table, his Nature would not be *burdened*, but *refreshed* and *recreated*; his *Eyes* would not swim in *Floods* of Rheum, nor his *Brains* in *Seas* of Liquor; his *Face* would not be fired with the *unwholsome Inflammations* of his Liver, nor his *Reason* overcast with the *Clouds* and *Vapours* of his gorged Stomach; but after his *frugal* Meals, he would still find his Organs *fresh* and *vigorous*; and when he went to Bed, his *Sleep* would not be broken with so many *unquiet* Starts, nor *sickly* Qualms; nor in the Morning would he awake in a *Fever*; but all his Life would be *serene* and *calm*, and he would enjoy all that is *pleasant* in Luxury, and be only barred from the apparent *Sting* of it. Many other Instances I might add, but these I think are sufficient to demonstrate, that *Vice*

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is the great *Disturber* even of those *sensual* Pleasures and *Delights* that it promises to us: So that it plainly *contradicts* its own Pretensions, and though it invites to *Pleasure*, yet entertains us with nothing but *Distraction* and *Uneasiness*. The Cup of *Fornication* which it holds out to us, tho' 'tis *spiced* at the *Top*, is Gall and Wormwood at the *Bottom*; and all those *Delights* that it courts us with, are only so many *painted Miseries*; which though they may look amiable and inviting at a *distance*, yet upon a more *considerate* View will be found to be most wretched *Cheats* and *Impostures*. So that methinks were we but *ingenious Epicures*, that *understood* the Pleasures of the Body, and the *true* Methods of *enjoying* them; we should for *their* Sakes discard those *Lusts*, that are so *contrary* and *destructive* to them; and it would be as impossible for us not to *hate* our Sins, as not to *love* our Pleasures.

And thus you see, how many *Mischiefs* and *Inconveniencies* our *Lusts* bring upon us in respect of our *Bodies* and *outward* Circumstances; so that if we had no *immortal Spirit* to take care of, no Interest beyond the *Grave* to look after, yet methinks had we but *Reason* enough to *understand*, and *Self-Love* enough to *pursue* our *present* Welfare, *that* were sufficient to oblige us to *mortify* our *Lusts*. For so long as *they* live they will be *Plagues* to us, and we must never expect a *quiet* Possession of our own *Happiness*, till we have utterly *destroy'd* these *mutinous* Disturbers of it, that are as so many *Thorns* in our Eyes, and *Goads* in our Sides. But alas! 'tis not our *bodily Happiness* only that they interrupt, and invade; but (which is more intolerable) they poison our *Souls* with their contagious Breath, and scatter Plagues and Infection over our *noblest* Faculties. Which brings me to the *second* Sort of Motives, to persuade you to *mortify* your Sin, *viz.* those that are drawn from the present *Mischiefs* and *Inconveniences* that it brings upon our *Souls*; which are chiefly these three.

First, It spoils our *Understandings*.

Secondly, It subverts the *natural* Sub-ordination of our *Faculties*.

Thirdly, It disturbs the *Tranquillity* of our *Minds*.

I. Consider how much your Sins do *spoil* and *waste* your *Understandings*. For Sin is an *Affront* to our *Understandings*, and a plain *Contradiction* to the Reason of our *Minds*; there being no *Vice* whatsoever but what is founded in *Folly* and *Unreasonableness*. Whilst therefore we live in *Sin*, we do so far lay aside our *Reason*, (which ought to be the Moderator of our Actions,) and abandon our selves to the Conduct of our own blind *Appetites* and head-strong *Passions*; which will naturally *weaken* our rational *Faculties*, and bring a lingring *Consumption* on our *Understandings*. For as our *Powers* are improved and perfected by *Exercise*, so they are impaired and wasted by *Disuse* and *Inactivity*; and therefore our *Reason* being such a *Power* as is not naturally to be perfected but by *Action*, it necessarily follows that the less *active* it is, the more *imperfect* it must be. Whilst therefore we live in *Sin*, or (which is all one) in the *Neglect* of our Reason, we *consume* and *waste* our rational *Faculties*; which being *unemploy'd* will naturally contract *Rust*, and grow every Day more *weak* and *restive*. For a Life of *Sin* is all transacted by *Sense* and *Passion*; Reason sits looking on, and having no Part in the brutish Scene, *melts* away in *Sloth* and *Idleness*: Its vital Powers *freeze* for want of

of *Motion*, and like ſtanding Waters *ſtagnate*, and gather Mire till they *corrupt* and *putrify*. And beſides this *Decay* that Sin brings upon our *Underſtanding*, by taking us off from the *Exerciſe* of it, it is alſo injurious to thoſe bodily *Organs*, by which our *Underſtanding*, while we are in the Fleſh, doth *reaſon* and *operate*. For our Body is as it were the *muſical Inſtrument*, upon which our Mind ſets all its *Harmony*, and by which it runs all the curious Diviſions of *Diſcourſe*: And the Blood and Spirits and Brain and other Parts of it are the *Strings* of this *Inſtrument*, upon the well-tuning of which depends all the *Muſick* of *Reaſon*. But now there is ſcarce any *Sin*, that doth not ſome way or other *indiſpoſe* our *Bodies* for the Uſe of our *Minds*, and render them *unfit*, eſpecially for the moſt *perfect* Exerciſe of our *Reaſon*. Thus *Drunkenneſs* dilutes the Brain, which is the *Mint* of the Underſtanding, and *drowns* thoſe Images which are ſtamp'd upon it in a *Deluge* of unwholſome Moiſtures. Thus *Gluttony* cloggs the *animal* Spirits, which are as it were the *Wings* of the Mind, and renders them *incapable* of performing the nobleſt and ſublimeſt Flights of *Reaſon*. Thus *Anger* and *Wantonneſs* force up the boiling Blood into the Brain, and by that *diſorders* the Motions of the Spirits there, *confounds* the Fantaſms, and *diſturbs* the Conceptions, and *ſhuffles* the Idea's of the Imagination into an Heap of *inarticulate* and *diſorderly* Fancies. And how is it poſſible our Minds ſhould ſtrike *true Harmony*, when its Inſtrument is thus *diſorder'd*, and all the Strings of it are ſo *out* of *Tune*? How ſhould we *underſtand* well, while our *Brains* are *overcaſt* with the thick Fumes of *ſenſual* Luſts; and thoſe *Spirits*, which ſhould wing our Minds, are grown ſo *lifeleſs* and *unactive*, that they rather *hamper* and *entangle* them? For what Clearneſs is to the *Eye*, that Purity is to the *Mind*: As *Clearneſs* doth diſpoſe the *Eye* to a quick and diſtinct Perception of *material* Objects; ſo *Purity* from Luſt and Paſſion diſpoſes the *Mind* to a more clear Apprehenſion of *intellectual* Ones; and the more any Man's Soul is *cleanſed* from the Filth and Dregs of *Senſuality*, the *brighter* it will be in its Conceptions, and the more *nimble* and *expedite* in its *Operations*. For *Purity* doth naturally fit the *Body* to the *Mind*; it puts its Organs all in *Tune*, and renders its Spirits *fine* and *agil*, and fit for the *nobleſt* Exerciſes of *Reaſon*: Which they can never be, whilſt they are ſubject to diſorderly *Paſſions*, and drenched in the unwholeſome Reeks of *Senſuality* and *Voluptuouſneſs*. But beſides this *Miſchief* which Sin doth to our *Underſtandings*, by rendering our *Bodies* unapt, to all *intellectual* Purpoſes; it alſo dyes the *Mind* with *falſe* Colours, and fills it with *Prejudice*, and *undue Apprehenſion* of Things. For while our Souls are under the Sway of any diſorderly *Paſſion* or *Appetite*, they will naturally warp our *Judgments* into a Compliance with their own Intereſt; and bribe us to *judge* of Things, not according to what they *are*, but according to what we would *have* them: And when our *Judgments* are thus bribed by our *Intereſt*, and ſwayed by our *Paſſions*, it is impoſſible we ſhould *judge truly* of Things. For our *Paſſions* will *diſcolour* the Objects of our Underſtandings, and *diſguiſe* them into ſuch Shapes as are moſt agreeable to our *Humour* and *Intereſt*; and ſo our *Opinions* of Things will alter upon every Variation of our *Humours*, and our *Thoughts*, like *Weather-cocks*, will be wheeling about upon every *Change* of Wind. So that while we are encompaſſed with the Miſts of *ſinful Prejudice*, they will neceſſarily hinder the *Proſpect* of our *Reaſon*, and obſcure the *Brightneſs* of our *Underſtandings*; and the *Clearneſs* of our diſcerning *Faculties*. And thus you ſee, how natural it is to Vice to *ſpoil* and *waſte* our *Underſtandings*, and to choke up thoſe Fountains of *Light* within us with Clouds and Darkneſs. And that it doth ſo is very apparent in Fact; for how much

much *wicked* Men have lost their *Reason*, is apparent by the *ridiculous Principles* upon which they generally act; which generally are so very *weak* and *absurd*, that it would be impossible for Men to assent to them, were not their Understandings *perished*, and the Reason of their Minds woefully *impaired* and *wasted*. As for Instance; the *desperate Atheist* wishes that there were no God, upon this Principle, that it is better for Men to be without a *God*, than to be without their *Lusts*; than which there can be nothing more *wild* or *extravagant*: For it is plain that *without* our Lusts we can be *happier* than *with* them; whereas it is the *common Interest* of Mankind, that the World should be governed by infinite *Goodness* conducted by infinite *Power* and *Wisdom*; and no Man, or Society of Men can be *happy* without it. For take *God* out of the World, and you take away all *Hope* from the miserable, all *Comfort* from the sorrowful, and all *Suport* from the dejected and calamitous; and at one blow cut in sunder all the Bands of *Society*, rase the Foundations of *Virtue*, and confound all Distinction between *Good* and *Evil*. And yet the besotted Wretch, for the sake of a paltry *Lust* that *betrays* him with a Kiss and *stings* him in the Enjoyment, would fain banish *God* out of the World; though it is apparent that in so doing he would do Mankind more *Mischief*, than if he should blow out all the *Lights* of Heaven, or pull down the *Sun* from the Firmament. And in the general, what more *ridiculous Principles* can there be thought, than such as these? *That Sense is to be preferred before Reason, Earth before Heaven, Moments before Eternity; that the short-liv'd Pleasures of Sin, which expire in the Fruition, are sufficient to balance the Loss of an immortal Heaven, and the Sense of an eternal Hell; that 'tis Time enough to repent when we can Sin no more; and that God is so fond a Being, as that rather than ruin those that willfully spurn at his Authority, and trample upon his Laws, he will accept a few Tears and Promises to line well, when we can live no longer, in exchange for all the Duty we owe him; and that we may sit all the Day in the Lap of our Lusts, and enjoy them without controul, and then at Night when we can enjoy them no longer fly up to Heaven upon the Wings of a* LORD HAVE MERCY UPON US. And yet a wicked Life is either built upon *no Principles* at all, or upon such as these which are ridiculous beyond all the extravagant Conceits of *Fools* or *Madmen*. 'Tis no wonder therefore, that the Scripture so frequently brands the *Sinner* with the infamous Character of a *Fool*; for if you measure him by the Principles he acts upon, there is not a *greater Fool* in Nature; which is a plain Evidence, how much *Vice* doth *besot* the Understanding of Men, and like those barbarous *Philistines*, puts out their Eyes, only to *sport* it self with their *Follies* and *Extravagances*. So that methinks had we any *Reverence* for our own *Reason*, by which we are constituted *Men*, and distinguished from the *Beasts* that perish; we should never endure those *Lusts* within our Bosoms, that do so much *impair* and *waste* it.

II. Sin subverts the *natural* Subordination of our *Faculties*. For the *natural* Order and Polity of our *Natures* consists in the Dominion of our *Rational* Faculties, over our sensitive Passions and Appetites; so that then only we live according to the *Law* of our *Nature*, when we eat and drink, and love and hate, and fear and hope, and desire and delight, according as *right Reason* prescribes. For the *noblest* Principle of human Nature is *Reason*, by which it is that we are constituted *Men*, and advanced into a *Form* of Beings above all *sublunary* Creatures; and this *Reason* of ours is implanted in us, by the great Author of our Beings, for no other End, but only to *steer* and *direct* us; to be an *Eye* to our blind and brutish

Affections, to *correct* the Errors of our *Imaginations*, and bound the Extravagances of our *Passions* and *Appetites*, and to *regulate* the whole Course of our *Actions*; so as that we may demean our selves, as becomes such *Beings* as we are, and placed in such *Relations* and *Circumstances*. God therefore having compounded us of contrary *Natures*, *viz.* *Rational* and *Sensual*, which are pregnant with contrary *Inclinations*, and *Affections*, from hence arises the *Necessity* of all those Heroick *Virtues*, which consist in the *Dominion* of our *Reason* over the sensitive *Affections* and *Appetites*; such as Chastity and Sobriety, Meekness and Equanimity, and the like; all which are proper to us as Beings made up of contrary *Principles*, from whence spring those contrary *Inclinations*, in the good or bad *Government* whereof consists the Nature of *Virtue* and *Vice*. Whilst therefore we keep our brutal *Passions* and *Appetites* in Subjection to our *Reason*, we follow the genuine Current of *human Nature*; in which our *best* and *noblest* Principle *rules*, and all our *inferiour* Powers are regularly *subordinate* to it: But when we degenerate into a State of *Sin*, we thereby discompose the Harmony of our Natures, and put all our well-ranked Faculties into a strange *Disorder* and *Confusion*. For every Sin is a *Rebellion* either of our Passions, or Appetites against our *Reason*; and we never commit any known Evil, but we wilfully *affront* our own *Understandings*, and offer open *Violence* to those *superiour* Faculties that should *rule* and *govern* us. So that when by a *Custom* of *Sinning*, our Passions and Appetites have been train'd up for a while in *Disobedience* to our *Reason*, they will by degrees grow so *head-strong* and *ungovernable*, that it will be a hard Matter to restrain them within any Compass of *Reason* and *Sobriety*; and unless we take a World of Pains to suppress them, they will never leave *rioting* and *tumultuating* within us, till they have broke through all their *natural* Confinements into a *licentious*, *wild*, and *boundless* Anarchy; and, having thus got head within us, and beaten our *Reason* from its *native Throne*, they will hurry us headlong into all manner of *Follies* and *Extravagances*. For now we shall act no longer from *Reason*, but from *Sense*; our Nature being *turn'd* upside-down, and the Cardinal Points of our Motion *chang'd* into quite contrary Positions; so that our *Reason* will stand us in no other Stead, but only to cater for our *Flesh* and *sensitive Affections*, and to make us *Brutes* with greater *Luxury* and *Relish*: And being thus wholly acted by our *brutish Sense*, and led only by the *blind* Instincts of the *Flesh*, our *Reason* will have no Hand in the *Government* of our *Lives*; but, like the Beasts of the Field, we shall live at random, and do Things, not because they are *reasonable* in themselves, but because they are *pleasing* to our unreasonable *Affections* and *Appetites*. Such a strange *Disorder* doth Sin bring upon our *Natures*; so miserably doth it *blend* and *confound* our Faculties, that were it not for our *Speech* and *Shape*, it would scarce leave us any remaining Character of *Distinction* from the *Beasts* that perish. For it dissolves our *Reason* into a mere *sensual Sagacity*, and enslaves that *high-born* Power to every *base* Passion and Appetite; and so reduces our *well-formed Natures*, into an undistinguished *Chaos*, where Sense and Reason, Brute and Man are *shuffled* together in an Heap of rude and undigested *Ruins*. So that methinks had we any Reverence for that *excellent Nature* that we carry about with us, that *Nature* by which we are allied to *Angels*, and do border upon *God* himself; we should never endure to harbour those *inhuman Lusts*, that do so *disorder* and *confound* it, that make such *Spoils* and *Devastations* within us, that do so disturb the *Harmony* of our Faculties, and disjoint the very *Frame* of our Beings.

III. Sin *disturbs* the Tranquillity of our *Minds*; and this naturally follows from the *former*: For the *Mind* of Man can never be at *Ease*, so long as its *Bones* are out of Joint, and all its *Faculties* so wofully *disorder'd.* For thus every Thing is at *ease*, so long as it is in its own *natural* State and Condition: But when once its Parts are *diplaced*, or put into a *Disorder*, or *distorted* into an unnatural Figure; it is in *restless* Motion till it *returns* again to the specifick State and Posture of its own *Nature.* And so it is with the *Mind* of Man; which, while it preserves its own *natural Station*, and *Superiority* over our Affections and Appetites, is *calm* and *quiet* and *serene*, and enjoys within it self perpetual *Ease* and *Tranquillity*: But being thrown out of its *native Throne*, and led into *Captivity* by its own *Vassals*, it can find no Rest in this *preternatural* State; but like a disjointed Member is in perpetual *Anguish* and *Anxiety*; and having, like all other Things, an inward *strong Propension* to its own *natural* State and Condition, it will be perpetually *struggling* and *contending* towards it, till it hath quite *wearied* and *tired* out it self with its own vain and ineffectual Efforts; and then it will sit down and bemoan it self, and pine away with *Grief* and *Dissatisfaction.* And hence it is that in the Course of a *wicked Life* we feel such Contentions between the *Flesh* and the *Spirit*, such perpetual Broils between the Law in our *Minds*, and the Law in our *Members*; which proceeds from this *natural Struggling*, and *Conatus* of the *Mind* to recover its *native Empire* over our Affections and Appetites: From which it will never wholly surcease, till it is wholly *subdued* to the Will of the *Flesh*; and when it is so, it will be perpetually *torn* and *distracted* by those *various*, *wild*, and *inconsistent* Affections, whereunto it will be subjected. For so long as our *Passions* are subject to our *Reason*, there can be no *Division* among them; because nothing can *divide* our *Passions*, but only our proposing to our selves *different* and *contrary* Ends: But the Ends of *Reason* are all *consistent* with, and *subordinate* to one another, its *lesser* and *inferiour* Ends being only the Inns at which it baits upon the Road towards its *superiour* ones, and whilst we are under the Power and Conduct of *one* sovereign End, our *Passions* must necessarily *joyn* hand in hand, and walk together like Brethren in *Unity.* But when once they have shaken off the Yoke of *Reason*, and submitted themselves to the Dominion of *Sense*; among that great *Variety* of Ends and Objects which *Sense* proposes to them, they must needs be *torn* and *divided* one from another. For such is the *Scantiness* of *sensual* Goods, that we not being able to *content* our selves with any *one* of them, are fain to walk the Rounds in a constant Succession and Circle of *Varieties*; and then every one of these *various Goods* will create within us a *various Desire*: And so as *Sense* doth multiply its *Temptations*, we shall still multiply our *Desires* and *Affections*; and at every *new Game* that springs, we shall still let fly *new Passions.* But now the Ends of *Vice* are not only *various*, but also *contrary* to, and *inconsistent* with one another: For all *Vices* consisting in Extremes, either in *Excesses* or *Defects*, their Ends must be *contrary* too, and so they cannot but disagree; *Excess* and *Defect* being in themselves *most contrary.* And these *contrary Vices* must needs raise *contrary Factions* in the *Mind*, and people it with a Rabble of *wild* and *inconsistent* Passions; which will be always bandying one against another, and consequently embroiling the *Soul* in eternal *Mutinies* and *Tumults.* And this is the State of every *vicious* Man; he is divided into infinite *Schisms* and *Separations*; and like a *barbarous Countrey*, cantoned out into a World of petty Principalities, which are always together by the Ears, and continually invading one anothers Dominions. Now what a miserable *Distraction* must a Man's *Mind* be in, when it is thus *justled* to and fro in such a Crowd of *contrary* and *impetuous* Passions; *Pride* shoves it one way, and *Covetousness* another; when *Ambition* thrusts it forward, and *Cowardice* pulls it back again; and so many *different Lusts* do at the same Time hurry it so many *different* and *contrary Ways*? How is it possible it should escape *Actæon's* Fate, to be worried till it is torn in Pieces by its own Hounds? And therefore as we value

value the *Peace* of our own *Minds*, and would not have the inward *Harmony* discompos'd by the perpetual *Jarrings* of so many *contrary* Passions, it concerns us to *subdue* and *mortifie* our *Lusts:* For so long as we entertain these seditious *Incendiaries*, they will be perpetually raising *Tumults* within us, and our *Minds* will never be at *quiet* for them. For the only Way to keep our *Minds* at Peace, is to *unite* our *Affections*; which we can never hope to do, till we have *subdu'd* them to the Empire of our *Reason*. But when we come to be under the Command of that *one supreme* End which our *Reason* will propose to us, as the *utmost Scope* of our *Desires*; then and not till then will these *scattered* Rivulets of our Affections *unite* themselves in *one* and the *same* Channel, and flow towards *one* and the *same* Ocean: And then our *Mind* will be at *Rest*, and its *contrary Passions* being *laid*, which now like the *boisterous Waves* dash one against another, it will no longer be capable of being *ruffl'd* into a Storm; but in the midst of all the *Changes* of this World, will find it self perpetually inspired with the most *calm* and *gentle* Thoughts.

Chap. IV.

Of Helps *to* Mortification, *given us by the Spirit of God.*

THE *Motives* and *Arguments* for *Mortification*, which arise from considering the *Mischiefs* and *Inconveniencies* of *Sin*, having been spoken to, I shall now proceed to such *Helps* to this Duty, as are given us by the Spirit of God: And I shall consider them under these *four* Heads;

First, The *external* Arguments and Motives of the *Gospel*.

Secondly, The *external* Providences of the *divine Spirit* by which he excites us to our Duty.

Thirdly, The Aids and Assistances which the *holy Angels* give us, who are the Agents and Ministers of the *Holy Ghost*.

Fourthly, The *internal* Motions and Operations of *the Holy Ghost* upon *our Souls*.

I. Let us consider the *external* Arguments and Motives of the *Gospel*; such as the *Promises* and *Threats* of it, the great *Example* of our *Saviour* described in it, together with all those mighty Considerations out of his *Passion* and *Resurrection*, his *Intercession* for us at the right Hand of God, and his *Coming* to judge the World in the *last Day:* All which are the Aids and Assistances of the *holy Spirit*, who hath revealed them to us, and demonstrated their *Truth* and *Divinity* by sundry *miraculous* Operations; which are therefore called the *Evidences* and *Demonstrations* of the *Spirit*. So that whatsoever there is in the Gospel to enable us to our Duty; whatsoever Counter-charms its *Promises* afford us against the Charms and Allurements of our own *Lusts*; whatsoever *Antidotes* its *Threatnings* prescribe us against the Terrours of the Devil's Temptations; whatsoever *Motives* there are in the *Life* or *Death*, *Resurrection*, and *Intercession* of our blessed *Saviour*, and in his final *Judgment* by which we must stand, or fall for ever: In a Word, whatsoever *Arguments* the Laws or Creed of our *holy Religion* offer us, either to *incite* us to our *Duty*, or to *enable* us to baffle the Temptations of *Vice*; they are all from the *Spirit* and consequently are to be reckon'd among those gracious Aids and Assistances which *He* affords us. And hence the *Gospel* which teaches us to *deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly*, is called the *Grace of God which bringeth Salvation unto alll Men*; Tit. ii. 11, 12. And in *Rom.* viii. 2. the Apostle calls it *the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus*, by which he was *made free from the Law of Sin and Death:* Nay some times the Gospel is called the Spirit, 2 Cor. iii 6. *who also hath made us able Ministers of the new Testament, not of the Letter, but of the Spirit*; *i. e.* not of the Law, but of the Gospel, *for the Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth Life:*

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That is, as he elsewhere explains himself, the Law is a Ministration of *Death*, but the Gospel brings *Life* and *Immortality* to light: And that this is the Meaning, is plain from what follows, ℣. 7, 8. *but if the Ministration of Death written and engraven in Stones was glorious,* (which is a plain Description of the Law of *Moses*) *how shall not the Ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?* And consonantly hereunto by the *Spirit* we may understand the Motives and Arguments of the *Gospel.*

II. Let us consider the *external* Providences of the *divine Spirit* by which he excites us to our *Duty*, and doth many ways administer to our *Reformation*; which are so considerable a Part of God's *Grace* and *Assistance*, that there are very few *good Thoughts* and *Purposes* that spring up in our Minds, which have not their *Rise* from some *external* Event of *divine Providence.* And this we may easily observe, by following the *Train* of our own Thoughts, and pursuing the *Stream* of them to their *Spring* and *Original*: For though many Times we find *good Thoughts* injected into us we know not *how*, nor *whence*; yet, if we do but curiously observe the *Rise* of our soberest Thoughts and Purposes, we shall generally find that it is some *external* Accident or other that occasions them. Either our *Sin* betrays us into some great *Shame* or *Infelicity*, or our wicked *Designs* are baffled by some intervening *Accident*, or some remarkable *Judgment* meets us, as the *Angel* did *Balaam*, in the Road of our *Folly* and *Wickedness*, by which our *stupid* Consciences are many Times *startled* into Reflections; or by some good *Providence* we are directed to a *serious Book*, or *faithful Guide*, or link'd into some *pious Family*, or *virtuous Association*, by whose wise *Admonitions*, holy *Examples*, or friendly *Reproofs*, we are frequently inspired with *good* Thoughts, and *serious* Resolutions; and from these, or such like *Providences* ordinarily spring the Beginnings of our *Reformation.* So that it is no *mean Assistance* that the divine Providence contributes to us; but by a thousand *Arts* of Love, and *Methods* of Kindness which we take no *Notice* of, it administers to our *Recovery*, and serves the everlasting Interests of our *Souls.* Sometimes it *removes* Temptations from us, and keeps them at a *distance*, while our *Lust* is *hot* and *ready* to take Fire, till it is cool'd and extinguish'd by *sober* Counsels: Sometimes by *indiscernible Accidents* it suggests good *Thoughts* to us, and raises good *Desires* in us, and then *seconds* those Accidents with such a *Train* of Events, as it knows will be most conducive to *continue* those *Thoughts*, and to *nurse* up those *Desires* into fix'd and lasting *Resolutions*: In a Word, it observes the *mollia fandi tempora*, and is infinitely watchful in the *timing* its Addresses, so as to strike while the Iron is *hot*, and to interpose when we are most *apt* to be persuaded and wrought upon. If therefore by these Assistances of the *divine Providence* we do *mortify* our *Lusts*, we do it by the *Spirit*; who doth so order and dispose all those *outward Events*, and *Accidents*, as may be most conducive to our *Amendment.*

III. Let us consider those Aids and Assistances, which the *holy Angels* give us, who are the Agents and Ministers of the *Holy Ghost*; whom he sends forth to *succour* and *assist* us in the Discharge of our *Duty.* And hence *Heb.* i. 14. they are said to be *ministring Spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be Heirs of Salvation:* And in pursuance of this their Ministry they are said to *pitch* their *Tents* round about those that fear God, *Psal.* xxxiv 7. and God himself hath promised to *give his Angels charge over them to keep them in all their Ways*, in the xci. *Psal.* 11. which Expressions, I confess do immediately refer unto the *outward* and temporal Protection, which good Men do receive from the *holy Angels:* But since those *blessed* and *benign* Spirits are so much concerned in *human Affairs*, we cannot but suppose that, so far as their own Ability, and the Laws of the invisible World will permit them, they are ready to succour our *Souls*, as well as *Bodies*; and to contribute to our *eternal* as well as *temporal* Interests; especially considering that of our Saviour, *Luke* xv. 10. *that there is Joy in the Presence of the Angels of God over one Sinner that repenteth.* And if they are so far concern'd in our *Repentance*, as to *rejoyce* in it, to be

sure

ſure they will and do *promote* it; ſince in ſo doing they contribute to their own *Joy*. Now the *holy Angels*, being the Miniſters of the *divine Providence*, have great Advantages of aſſiſting us in our *Duties*, and ſerving the Intereſts of our *Souls*; which Advantages to be ſure their own *Goodneſs* and *Benignity* will prompt them to make the utmoſt Improvement of. They have many Opportunities to *preſent* good Objects to us, and to *remove* Temptations from us, of *diſciplining* our Natures by *Proſperities* and *Afflictions*, and of *ordering* and *varying* our outward Circumſtances, ſo as to render our *Duty* more *facile* and *eaſie* to us. And beſides, as they are *Spirits* they have a very *near* and *familiar* Acceſs to our *Souls*; not that they can make any *immediate Impreſſions* upon our Underſtandings, or Wills, which is a Sphere of Light to which no *created Spirit* can approach, but is under the immediate Oeconomy of the *Father of Spirits*: But yet being *Spirits*, I conceive, they may eaſily inſinuate themſelves into our *Fancies*, and mingle with the *Spirits* and *Humours* of our Bodies; and by that means ſuggeſt *good Thoughts* to us, and raiſe *holy Affections* in us. For that they can work upon our *Fancies* is apparent; elſe there could be neither *Diabolical* nor *Angelical* Dreams. And if they can ſo act upon our *Fancies*, as to excite new *Images* and *Repreſentations* in them, they may by this means communicate new *Thoughts* to the *Underſtanding*; which naturally prints off from the *Fancy* all thoſe Ideas, and Images which it ſets and compoſes. And as they can work upon our *Fancies*, ſo they can alſo upon our *Spirits* and *Humours*; elſe they have not the Power of *curing*, or *inflicting* a Diſeaſe; and by thus working upon our *Spirits* they can in ſome meaſure *moderate* the Violence of our *Paſſions*, which are nothing but the *flowings* and *reflowings* of the *Spirits* to and fro from the Heart: And by working upon our *Humours* they can compoſe us to ſuch a *ſedate* and *ſerious Temper*, as is moſt apt to receive *religious Impreſſions*, and to be *influenc'd* by the Motions of the *Holy Ghoſt*. Theſe Things I doubt not but but the *bleſſed Angels* can do, and many Times do, though we *perceive* it not: And though poſſibly by the *Laws* of the World of *Spirits* they may be *reſtrained* from doing their *utmoſt* for us, that ſo we may ſtill act with an uncontrouled *Freedom*, and be left under a Neceſſity of *conſtant* and *diligent* Endeavour, yet doubtleſs their *Aſſiſtance* is not wanting to us; but as the *evil Angels* are always ready to *pervert* and *ſeduce* us, ſo the *good* are no leſs ready to *reform* and *recover* us. And ſince whatſoever they do for us, they do as the *Agents* and *Miniſters* of the *divine Spirit*; whatſoever we do by their Aſſiſtance, we do by the *Holy Spirit*.

IV. And *laſtly*, let us conſider the *internal* Motions and Operations of the *Holy Ghoſt* upon our *Souls*. For beſides all thoſe Aſſiſtances which the *Holy Spirit* vouchſafes to us by his *Word*, and his *Providence*, and his holy *Angels*; he does alſo very powerfully *aid* and *help* us by his own *immediate Motions* and *Suggeſtions*. For that the Miniſtrations of *Religion* have been always accompanied with the *internal* Operations of the *Spirit*, is evident from that *miraculous* Succeſs that *Religion* hath found in the World: For I cannot imagine how *Chriſtianity*, that never was beholding to *humane Force* and *Power*, but inſtead of that found all the Powers of the World armed *againſt* it, and had ſo many mighty *Prejudices* to combate, before ever it could be admitted to ſpeak with Mens *Reaſon*; I ſay, I cannot imagine, how under ſuch Circumſtances it could have *thrived* and *flouriſhed* as it did, had it not been accompanied with an *inviſible Power* from *above*. For how did it *triumph* in its very *Infancy* over all the Power and Malice of the World, growing like the *Palm-tree* by Depreſſion, and *conquering* in the midſt of *Flames*? What wonderful *Alterations* did it make in the *Lives* and *Manners* of Men, transformed in an Inſtant the *debauched* and *diſſolute* into Patterns of the ſtricteſt *Temperance* and *Sobriety*, and with its mighty Charms turning *Wolves* into *Lambs*, and *Vultures* into *Turtle-doves*? Which wondrous Effects were ſo very frequent, that the *Heathens* themſelves took ſpecial Notice of them; which, as St. *Auſtin* tells us, made them to attribute its Succeſs to the Power

of *Magick*; thinking it impossible that it should do such Wonders, without the Assistance of some *powerful Spirit*. And indeed it is not to be supposed, how it could work such *strange* and *sudden Alterations* in Men, by its *external* Arguments and Motives, without a *divine Power* concurring with them and animating and enforcing them: And though now that *Christianity* hath gotten such footing in the World, and is become the Religion of *Nations*, the *divine Spirit* does not *ordinarily* work upon Men in such a *strange* and *miraculous* Way; but proceeds in more *human* Methods by joining in with our *Understandings*, and leading us forward by the Rules of *Reason* and *Sobriety*; so that whatsoever Aids it affords us, they work in the *same Way*, and after the *same Manner*, as if all were performed by the Strength of our *own Reason*; yet we have a *standing Promise* which extends to all Ages of *Christianity*, that to him who *improves* the Grace which he hath already, *more* Grace shall be given; that if we *work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling*, God will work in us *to will and to do*; and that he will give his *holy Spirit* to every one that sincerely *asks*, and *seeks* it. For of the *Performance* of this *Promise*, there are none of us all but have had many *sensible Experiences*; for how often do we find *good Thoughts* injected into our Minds we know not *how* nor *whence*? How frequently are we *seiz'd* with *strong* and *vehement* Convictions of the Folly and Danger of our own wicked Courses, even in the *midst* of our loose *Mirth* and *Jollity*, when we are *rock'd* into a deep *Security*, when we have *endeavour'd* to *chase* good Thoughts from our Minds, or to *drown* them in *Sensuality* and *Voluptuousness*? How often have we been *haunted* with their *Importunities*, till we have been *scar'd* by them into sober *Resolutions*? And when we have complied with them, what *Joys* and *Refreshments* have we sometimes found in the Discharge of our *Duty*, to encourage us to *Perseverance* in Well-doing? All which are *plain* and *sensible* Instances of the *internal* Operations of the *holy Spirit* upon our Souls. So that when we comply with these *inward* Motions of the *Holy Ghost*, so as to forsake those Sins which they dissuade us from, we do then *mortify the Deeds of the Body by the Spirit*.

From the Consideration of these Benefits by the *Spirit* of God, many useful *Inferences* may be deduced: And *First*, from hence we may discern the Necessity of the *Spirit*, to enable us to *mortify* the Deeds of the *Body*. And indeed considering the *Infirmity* of our Natures, and the many *Temptations* we have to encounter, how we are *habituated* to a *sensual Life* before we are capable of exercising our *Reason*, and how much our *Wills* are biass'd by our *carnal Inclinations*; it is hardly to be imagin'd, how we should ever be able to retrieve our selves from the Power and Dominion of our own *Lusts*, without some *supernatural* Aid and Assistance. For tho' we have an *Understanding* capable of distinguishing between *Good* and *Evil*, and of discerning all those *Advantages* and *Mischiefs* that are inseparable unto *virtuous* and *vicious* Actions; though we have a *Will* that can comply with the Dictates of right Reason, and is no Ways determined and necessitated to Evil; and though we can do whatsoever we will: Yet if besides those Motives which arise out of the *Nature* of *Virtue* and *Vice*, we had not *supernatural* Arguments to assist us, our *Inclinations* would certainly prove too strong for our *Reason*. If the *lascivious Wanton* had no other Arguments to oppose against the Temptations of *Lust*, but that it vexes him with *Impatience*, fills him with mad and ungovernable *Desires*, torments him with *Fear* and *Jealousy*, betrays him into *Sickness* and *Poverty*, and the like; how can it be expected that such *slender* Arguments should prevail against the Importunities of his *depraved Appetite*? If the *covetous Oppressor* had no other Motive to confront *his Lust* with, but that his Injustice exposes him to the Hatred of those whom he injures, and violates the Laws of Society, and consequently is destructive of the publick Good, in which his own is involved; alas! what *thin* Arguments would these be to him in Comparison with the Temptations of a Bag of Gold? And though to these *natural* Arguments God hath added sundry *supernatural* Ones in the Re-

Revelations of the *Gospel*, such as are in *themselves* sufficient to check our most *outragious Appetites*, and to baffle the *strongest Temptations*; Yet alas! our *Thoughts* are so squander'd among this great Multiplicity of *carnal* Objects that surround us, that did not the *divine Spirit* frequently suggest those *supernatural* Arguments to us, and by the powerful Influence of his *Grace* keep our Minds intent upon them, we should never recollect our selves to such a *thorough Consideration* of them, as is necessary to persuade our selves by them into a *lasting Resolution* of Amendment. So that we have very great need both of the *outward*, and *inward* Grace of God; for though we can *deliberate* what is best to *chuse*, and *chuse* what we find *best* upon Deliberation; yet we are like Men standing in *bivio*, between two contrary Roads, and are naturally indeed free to turn either to the *Right* Hand or to the *Left*; but on the *left-hand* Way there are so many *Temptations* perpetually beckoning to us, and inviting us unto that which is *Evil*, and our brutish *Passions* and *Appetites* are so ready upon all occasions to yield and comply with them; that we should certainly go that way, did not the *holy Spirit* importune us with strong Arguments to turn to the *right-hand* way of *Virtue* and *Goodness*.

II. We may learn from hence the Necessity of our *Concurrence* with the *Spirit*. For the *Spirit* of God works upon us in such a Way, as is most *congruous* to our *free* and *rational* Natures; that is, it doth not act upon us by mere *Force*, or irresistible *Power*, but addresses to our *Reason*, with Arguments and Persuasions, and so moves upon our *Wills* by the Mediation of our *Understandings*: But when he hath done all, he leaves it to our own Choice whether we will *reject*, or *embrace* his Proposals. For although I firmly believe, as no Man would be *wicked*, were he not invited by the Temptations of *Sin*, so no Man would be *good*, were he not solicited by the *Grace* of God; yet I see no Reason to imagine, that either the *one* or the *other* invades the Liberty of our *Wills*. The Temptations of *Sin* indeed incline us one Way and the *Grace* of *God* another; but when all is done, they leave us *free* to *chuse* or *refuse*, and neither the *one* nor the *other* forces or necessitates us. And hence the *Successes* of the *divine Grace* are in Scripture attributed to the *Disposition*, or *Indisposition* of the Subject it acts upon, so *Matth.* xi. 20, 21. *Then began he to upbraid the Cities wherein his mighty Works were done; woe unto thee Corazin, woe unto thee Bethsaida; for if the mighty Works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in Sack-cloth and Ashes.* From whence I argue, that *that Grace* which would have converted *Tyre* and *Sidon*, was not *irresistible*; for if it had it would have converted *Corazin* and *Bethsaida* too: For how could they have resisted *irresistible* Grace? And why should it not have had the *same* Effect on the *one*, which *it* would have had on the *other*; had there not been something in the *one* which was not in the *other*, which did actually *resist* and *vanquish* it? And so likewise in the Parable of the *Seed* sown in the *High-way*, the *stony*, *thorny* and *good* Ground, *Matth.* xiii. the Reason why the Seed prospered in *some*, and not in *others*, is plainly resolved into the *different* Condition of the *Soil*: for as for those that either considered not *at all*, or not *enough*, the Seed of the divine Grace proved altogether *ineffectual* to them; but as for those who had so *throughly* considered its Proposals, as to form in their Minds a *firm* and *settled* Judgment of them, it produced in them a most *fruitful* Spring of *Virtues* and *good Works*. Which is a plain Argument that the *Successes* of *God's Grace* depend upon the *Concurrence* of our *Endeavours* with it; for had it wrought *irresistibly* upon these *different* Soils, it must have had the *same Success* in all. And indeed it is infinitely unreasonable to expect, that God should make us good *irresistibly*, without the *free* Concurrence of our own *Will*, and *Endeavours*; since by so doing he must offer *Violence* to the Frame of our Beings, and *alter* the established Course of our *Natures*; which consists in a *free Determination* of our selves, according to the Dictates of our own *Reason*. For that which is *irresistible* must *necessitate* the Subject upon which it acts; and therefore if we are *impell'd* to be *good* by a

Power

Power which we cannot *resist*, it is not in our Power to *chuse* whether we will be *good* or *no*. Wherefore though God be infinitely *desirous* of our Happiness, and ready to *contribute* whatsoever is necessary to promote it; yet he will not effect it by *necessary* Means and Causes, but in such a way only as is fairly consistent with the *Liberty* of our *Wills*: that is, he will not save us without *our selves*, whether we will or no; but take our *free Consent* and *Endeavour* along with him. And having done all that is necessary to *persuade* us, he expects that we should *consider* what he saith, and upon *that*, *consent* to his gracious Proposals, and *express* this Consent in a constant Course of *holy* and *vertuous Endeavours*: And if we will not do *this*, we cannot be *sav'd*, unless God work a *Miracle* for us, and alters the Course of *Nature*; which is the *great Law* by which his Providence doth govern all the Beings in the World. And this we have no Reason to expect, either from the *Goodness* of *God's Nature* or from any *Revelation* he hath made to us: Not from the *Goodness* of his *Nature*; for why is it not as consistent with *that* to *govern* us as free Agents, as to *make* us such; Not from any *Revelation* of his Will; for that indispensably exacts our free *Concurrence* with his *Grace*, and *Assistance*, and requires us to make our selves a *new Heart*, to *cleanse* our selves *from all Filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit*, and *to work out our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling*. 'Tis true God is also said to *work in us to will and to do*, to *create in us a new Heart*, and to *create us in Jesus Christ unto good Works*: Which seemingly repugnant Expressions can be no otherwise reconciled, but by supposing *God* and *Man* to be *Joint-Causes* contributing to the same *Effect*; so that where God speaks as if he did all, we must suppose the *Concurrence* of our *Endeavours*; and where he speaks as if we were to do all, we must suppose the *Concurrence* of his own *Grace*.

III. We may be assur'd from hence of the Certainty of *Success*, upon such a *Concurrence* of our *Endeavours* with the *Spirit* of *God*: which plainly implies the Assistances of the *Spirit* to be within our *Power*, as being in an inseparable Conjunction with our *sincere* and *faithful* Endeavours. And that they are so, is apparent; for as for the *outward* Assistances of the *Spirit*, which are the powerful Arguments and Motives of the *Gospel*, we have them always at *hand*, and may make use of them when we *please*; we have a free Access to this *divine Armoury*, and may at any time furnish our selves with *sufficient Weapons* to assoil the most formidable *Temptations*: And as for the inward Aids of the blessed *Spirit*, God by his own free *Promise* hath inseparably entailed them upon our *honest* and *pious* Endeavours. Thus he hath promised to give his *Grace* to those who *humble* themselves, and to *draw nigh* unto them who *submit* themselves to him: *Jam.* iv. 6, 7, 8. and *unto every one that hath*, that is, improves what he hath, he hath promised *it shall be given* and that *he shall have abundance*, Mat xxv. 29. and to every one that *asks* sincerely and honestly, he hath promised *to give his Holy Spirit*, Luk. xi. 13. And thus by his own free *Promise* he hath tied *his* Spirit to *our* Endeavours, so that we may have his Assistance when we *please*; he being confined by his own *Promise* to be ready at our *Call*, and to come in to the Aid of our *Endeavours*, whensoever we shall *need* and *ask* his Assistance. And having such a powerful *Second* engaged in our Quarrel, what Reason have we to doubt of *Success* and *Victory*? For what *Lust* is there so strong that we may not *subdue*? What *Habit* so inveterate, that we may not *conquer*? What *Temptation* so powerful that we may not *repulse*, whose endeavours are thus *seconded* with Almighty Aids from above? For now whatsoever the *Divine Spirit* can do in us, *we* can do; because we can do that, which being done, will infallibly *oblige* him to *concur* with us: And though we cannot conquer our *Lusts* in our own *single* Strength, yet we can by our Endeavours engage *him* on our *side*, who is both *able* and *willing* to enable *us* to conquer them. So that if we *will*, we may be *invincible*: And there is no *Temptation* can be too *strong* for us, if we do not by our own *Sloth* and *Cowardice* disingage the *Almighty Spirit* from assisting us.

IV. From hence we may perceive how much Reason there is for our *continual Prayers* and *Supplications* to God; since it is so apparent that our *Victory* over *Sin*, and consequently our *eternal Welfare* doth so much depend upon the Aids and Assistances of the *Spirit* of *God*; and since God is so ready to *give* his *holy Spirit* to us, whensoever we sincerely *ask* and *desire* it. Now the great *Reason* of Prayer is *Want*, and the greatest *Encouragement* to it is *Assurance* of Supply; but there is nothing in the World that we have more *need* of, and (if we faithfully seek it) nothing that we can have more *Assurance* of, than the gracious Influence of the *Holy Ghost*. We have as much need of it, as of our daily *Bread*; because our Souls will *starve* and *famish* without it: And we have as much Assurance of it, as the sacred Word of the *God of Truth* can give us; because he hath promised it to us who can as soon cease to *be*, as not to be *faithful:* And therefore if after so much *Need* and *Encouragement*, we do neglect our *Prayers*, and turn our backs upon the Throne of *Grace*; it is a plain Argument that either we are wretchedly *insensible* of our *Need* of God's Grace, or causelesly *suspicious* of the *Truth* of his Promise. And doubtless he that can pass Day after Day without putting up one *Prayer* to Heaven, that can *venture* himself among the infinite *Snares* and *Temptations* of this World, without imploring the divine *Aid* and *Protection*, is a very *bold* and *fool-hardy* Sinner; one that declares he regards neither *God* nor his own *Soul*, and that he cares not what becomes of him either *here* or *hereafter*. Methinks did we but soberly consider how much we *want* God's Grace, and how *ready* he is to afford it us; we should as soon venture to rush *naked* into a Battel among Squadrons of Swords and Spears, as to go at any Time into the World without *God*, to hazard our immortal *Souls* in the midst of such a numberless Battel of *Temptations*, without arming our selves by *Prayer* with the divine *Grace* and Assistance. Wherefore since we have so much *Need*, and (if we seek it) so much *Assurance* too of the *Spirit* of God; let us take that excellent Counsel of the Author to the *Hebrews*, Heb. iv. 16. *Go boldly* and importunately *to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help us in the Time of Need.*

V. From hence we may perceive the indispensable *Necessity* of our faithful and sincere Endeavours, in order to the *mortifying* our *Lusts*. 'Tis a strange Principle which some Men have taken up, that if their Names are *recorded* in the eternal Roll of *Election*, they shall in Time be made good by an *irresistible Grace*; and that if they are *not*, they shall *never* be good at all, though they should *endeavour* it with their utmost *Power* and *Diligence:* And so they think, their best way is to *lye still* in the Harbour and expect the Event; concluding it in vain to begin their Voyage towards Heaven, without an *irresistible* Gale from thence. A Doctrine which I doubt too many Men have improved to their own *everlasting Ruin*; though it hath no Foundation at all in *Reason*, and hath nothing to support it self, but a few *mistaken* Phrases of Scripture. But he that shall impartially consult the whole *Current* of God's Word, will find that the ordinary Language and Sense of it is this; that God *desires not the Death of a Sinner*, but *would have all Men to be saved*; but because he would save us in such a Way as is congruous to *free Agents*, and not by *fatal* and *necessary* Means, therefore he indispensably exacts the Concurrence of our *Endeavours*; that we should *run the Race that is set before us*, and *strive to enter into the strait Gate*, and that *by patient Continuance in well-doing we should seek for Honour and Glory and Immortality*. And from any thing that God hath said to us, we have as much Reason to hope to be *nourish'd* without *eating*, as to be *sav'd* without *Endeavour*. 'Tis true, God hath promised by his Grace to *co-operate* with us, to *joyn* in with our Faculties, and *bless* our vertuous Essays; but he is by no means obliged to *work* for us, while we sit *idle*; to *mortifie* our Lusts while we *feed* and *pamper* them; or to *purifie* our Minds, while we go on to *pollute* them with all the *Filthiness* of the Flesh and Spirit. No: if we would that God should *assist* us, we must do what we *can* for our selves: We can attend upon the ordinary *Means* and *Ministries* of Sal-

vation

vation, we can *ponder* and *consider* the great *Motives* of our Religion, and *abstain* at least from the *outward* Acts of Sin, and implore the divine Aid to prosper and succeed our Endeavours. And if we will do but this, and what else is in our *Power*, let us then blame God, if we are not successful, and if we die in our *Sins*, let us charge his *Decrees* with our *Ruin*. But if we disregard the *publick Ministries* of Religion, and wilfully excommunicate all *good Thoughts* from our Minds; if we will comply with every *Temptation* to Sin, and refuse to crave *Assistance* from Heaven against it; we have none to blame for our *Ruin* but *our selves*. For God hath told us before-hand, that *He* will not *save* us without *our selves*; and therefore he that is to go along Journey, hath as much Reason to sit down in hope to be snatched up into the Air by a Whirlwind, and so to be carried on the Wings of it to his appointed Stage; as we have to neglect our *Endeavours* for Heaven, in Expectation to be haled and snatched up thither, by the Almighty *Pulleys* of an *irresistible* Grace. Let us not therefore upon this *vain Presumption* sit still any longer with our Hands in our Bosoms, lest we perish in our Sloth, and expose our Souls to *everlasting Ruin*, by an *idle* Expectation of being *irresistibly* saved.

VI. From hence we may discern the *Possibility* of keeping the Commands of God, in that God by his *Spirit* doth so powerfully *aid* and *assist* us. For supposing we cannot keep the divine Law by our own *single Strength* and Power, yet it is apparent that we can do *that* which will *oblige* the *divine Spirit* to *assist* and *enable* us to keep it; that is, we can do our *Endeavour*, which being done, entitles us to the *Promise* of divine Grace, and Assistance. And though we cannot do all *our selves*, yet since we can do so much as will certainly oblige *God* to impower us to do the *rest*; it is already in our Power to do *all*, if we will. He that is strong enough to carry a Burthen of an hundred Weight, but is required to carry two, may carry *both*; supposing that by bearing as much as he *can*, he shall certainly be *enabled* to carry the *whole*. Now God hath promised us by the Assistances of *his Grace*, whatsoever is wanting in the Power of our Nature; and therefore if we fall short of our *Duty*, and consequently of the *Rewards* of it, we can reasonably blame no one but *our selves*. For though we *cannot* do all in our *own* Strength, yet that we *do* not do all, is as much our Fault, as if we *could*; since we *may* do all through *Christ*, who would strenghen us, would we but do what we *can*. Let us therefore no longer cry out of the *Impossibility* of God's Commands, nor charge our Disobedience to them upon the *unavoidable Weakness* of our own Natures; since it is so plain, that our Sin is resolvable into no other Principle, but our own wretched *Wilfulness* and *Obstinacy*. But let us betake our selves to a *serious* and hearty *Endeavour* of doing our Master's Will; and if when we have done all that we *can*, we should then fall short of our *Duty*, and miss the *Reward* of it; we may then with good Reason call him an *austere Master*, for imposing *tyrannical* and *impossible* Commands, and expecting to *reap where he hath not sown*.

Seventhly and *lastly*, We may perceive from hence the *Inexcusableness* of Sinners, if they go on in their Wickedness. For God, you see, doth vouchsafe to us such *plentiful* Measures of his *Grace* and *Assistance*, that in the Strength of it we *may* mortifie our Lusts if we *will*, and work out our own *eternal Salvation*: But if we will be *negligent*, and rather *chuse* to *perish* in our Sin, than take the *pains* to subdue it by the *Grace* of God, our Folly is *inexcusable*; and no one can be charged with our *Ruin*, but *our selves*. For what could God have done *more* for us, than he hath already done? He hath *solicited* us to forsake our Sin with the most important *Arguments* and *Motives*, tempted our *Hopes* with a Heaven of *immortal Joys*, and alarmed our *Fears* with the Horrors of an *endless* and *intolerable Damnation*; so that we cannot go on in our Sin without *leaping* over Heaven into Hell, and *wading* through an infinite Ocean of Happiness into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone. He hath plainly told us, what the *Event* and *Issue*

of

of our Folly will be; and *warn'd* us before hand that if we will be *wicked*, we must be *miserable:* So that if after *this* we do go on in our Sin, we run our selves upon a *foreseen* Damnation, and leap into Hell with our *Eyes open.* He hath promised, that if we will seriously *attempt* our own Recovery, his *Grace* shall be *sufficient* for us, to back our *Endeavours* and crown them with *Success:* So that if after this we do persist in our Folly, we chuse *Destruction*, and rush headlong into a *Ruin* which we might easily avoid. In a Word, he hath again and again suggested *good Thoughts* to our Minds, and by an importunate *Iteration* of them hath frequently *courted* us to *repent*, and *live:* So that if still we persevere in our *Impenitence*, we stop our Ears to the Addresses of *Heaven*, and do in effect tell God, that we will not *hearken* to him, though our *Souls* are at Stake, and 'tis no less than an *everlasting* Ruin that he dissuades us from. And what *Remedy*, or *Excuse* is there for such *intolerable* Obstinacy? So that it is a plain Case, God hath done so *much* for us, that there is not any Thing *wanting* to our everlasting Salvation, but only our *own Wills*; and if we will not comply with his *Grace* and *Assistance*, he will not save us whether we *will* or *no.* So that, when *Inquisition* shall be made for the Blood of our *Souls*, the utmost we can charge God with, is this; that he did not tye up our Hands, to keep us from murdering our selves, with the Cords of an *irresistible* Fate; and by his *invincible* Power drag us to Heaven, whether we would or no. But if we have so little Regard of *our selves*, as to *spurn* at our own *Happiness*, it is not fit that God should *force* it upon us; and it would be a *mean* and *unreasonable* Condescension in him, to *prostitute* the Rewards of Virtue to those that wilfully refuse them. Wherefore if we *perish* in our Sin, after God hath done so much for us, he may fairly wash his Hands in *Innocency* over us, and charge our Blood upon our *own Heads:* And how deplorable soever our Condition proves in the future State, *God's Justice* will triumph for ever in our *Ruin*; and our own *Consciences*, in Consort with all the *rational* World, will pronounce him to be most *just and righteous in all his Ways.*

CHAP. V.

Of the Eternal Reward *of* Mortification *and Holiness.*

THE Apostle having declared for our Ecouragement, *Rom.* viii. 13. That *if we mortifie the Deeds of the Body, we shall live*; I shall now insist upon these two Propositions,

First, That there is a State of *Everlasting Life*, and *Happiness* prepared for *good* Men.

Secondly, That this their *everlasting Happiness* depends upon their *mortifying* their Lusts.

I. That there is a State of *everlasting Life* and *Happiness* prepared for *good* Men: The Truth of which I shall endeavour to prove by some *plain* and *easie Arguments.*

I. Because the *Law* of our *Natures* hath not a *sufficient* Sanction without it. That there is in us such a *Law* of *Nature*, by which Things and Actions are distinguished into *good* and *evil*; is every whit as evident, as that we have within us a Principle of *Reason.* For no Man using his *Reason* can ever think it indifferent in it self, whether we obey our *Parents*, or contemn them; whether we lye, or speak *Truth*; whether we be grateful, or disingenuous to our *Benefactors:* For between these Things there is such an *essential Difference*, that they can never be *equal* Competitors to a *rational* Approbation. And accordingly among all Mankind we may observe, that there are some *Vices*, which have as much the *universal* Judgment of *Reason* against them, as any false

Conclusion

Conclusion in the *Mathematicks*; and some *Vertues*, whose Goodness has been as *universally* acknowledged, as the Truth of any Principle in *Philosophy*. Wherefore since God hath created us with such a *Faculty*, as doth necessarily make such a *Judgment* of Good and Evil; this *Judgment* must be *God*'s, as well as the *Faculties* which made it: And that which is *God's Judgment* in us, must necessarily be a *Law* to us. God therefore having put such a *Law* into our *Natures*; we cannot but suppose, that he hath taken Care to enforce the *Observation* of it, by *rewarding* and *punishing* us, according as we *obey*, or *violate* it: For without the Sanctions of *Rewards* and *Punishments*, to induce Men to observe them, *Laws* are insignificant; and that Law-giver doth but *petition* his Subjects to obey, that doth not promise such *Rewards*, nor denounce such *Penalties*, as are *sufficient* to oblige them to it. And no *Reward* can be *sufficient* to oblige us to *obey*, that doth not abundantly *compensate* any *Loss*, or *Evil* we may sustain by our *Obedience*, no *Punishment sufficient* to deter us from *disobeying*, that doth not far surmount all that *Benefit*, or *Pleasure* we can hope to reap from our *Disobedience*. Since therefore God hath implanted a *Law* in our *Natures*, we must either suppose, that he hath *not sufficiently* secured it by *Rewards*, and *Punishments*; which is to blaspheme his *Wisdom*, and *Conduct*: Or else we must acknowledge, that he hath established it with such *Rewards*, and *Punishments*, as do make it far more adviseable to *obey*, than to *transgress* it; which that he hath done in *all* Instances, can never be proved, without granting the *Rewards* and *Punishments* of *another* World. For if there be no such Thing as *future Rewards* and *Punishments*, it is a Folly for any Man to concern himself about any Thing but his *present* Interest; and in Reason we ought to judge Things to be *good* or *evil*, only as they promote, or obstruct our *temporal* Happiness and Welfare. Now though it is certain, that in the general there is a *natural Good* accruing to us from all *virtuous* Actions, as on the contrary a *natural Evil* from all *vicious* Ones; and it is ordinarily more conducive for our *temporal* Interests to *obey*, than to *disobey* the great Law of our *Natures*: Yet there are a World of Instances, wherein *Vice* may be more advantagious to us than *Virtue*, abstracting from the *Rewards* and *Punishments* of *another* World. It is *ordinarily* better for me to be an *honest* Man, than a *Knave*, it is more for my *Reputation*, yea, and usually for my *Profit* too; and it is more for the *publick* Good, in which my *own* is involved: But yet *pro hic & nunc* it may be better for me, with respect only to *this* World, to be a *Knave*, than an *honest* Man. For whensoever I can but cheat so *secretly* and securely, as not to fall under the *publick* Lash, nor to impair my *Reputation*; and I can but *gain* more by the Cheat, than I shall *lose* in the Damage of the Publick; it will be doubtless more advantagious for me, as to my *worldly* Interest, to *cheat* than to be *honest*. And how often such fair *Opportunities* of Cozenage do occur, no Man can be insensible, that hath but the least Insight into the Affairs of the World. So that if God had not reserved *Rewards* and *Punishments* for us in *another* World, we should not have *sufficient Motives* universally to observe that great Law of Righteousness, which he hath given us: For whensoever we could cheat or steal *securely*, it would be highly reasonable for us to do it; because thereby we might promote our own *temporal* Happiness, which would be the *only* End we should have to pursue. And the same may be said of all *other Laws* of Nature, which without the great Motives of a *future Happiness* and *Misery*, could no longer induce any reasonable Man to obey them, than it is for his *temporal* Interest to do so. For suppose I can *secretly* stab, or poison a Man, whom I hate or dread, or from whose Death I may reap any considerable *Advantage*: What should *restrain* me from such a barbarous Fact; If you say, the *Law* of *Nature*; pray what *Reward* doth the Law of Nature propose *sufficient* to compensate the *Dissatisfaction* of my Revenge, or the *Danger* I run in suffering my Enemy to live? Or what *Punishment* doth the Law of Nature denounce, that is *sufficient* to balance the *Advantage* of a thousand

or ten thousand Pounds a Year, that may accrue to me by his Death? If you say, the Law of Nature proposes to me the *Reward* of a *quiet* and *satisfied* Mind, If I forbear; and denounces the Punishment of a *guilty* and *amazed* Conscience, if I commit the Murder: I easily answer, that this *Peace*, or *Horror*, which is consequent to the Forbearance, or Commission of Murder, arises from the Hope and Dread of *future Rewards* and *Punishments*; which being taken away, to murder, or not murder will be indifferent, as to any *Peace* or *Horror* that will follow upon it: And this being removed, what Consideration will there be left *sufficient* to *restrain* me from the bloody Fact, when I have an Opportunity to act it *securely*, and am furiously spurred on to it by my own *Revenge* and *Covetousness*? So that if there be no *Rewards* and *Punishments* in *another* Life, to enforce the Commands of the Law of Nature; it is apparent, that no such *Rewards* or *Punishments* are annexed to it in *this* Life, as are *universally sufficient* to oblige Men to observe it. And is it likely, that the *All-wise Governour* of the World would ever impose a *Law* under an *insufficient Sanction*? That he would ever give out his *Commands* to his Creatures, and then leave it *indifferent* to them whether they will *obey* him, or *no*? As he must needs have done, if in all Circumstances it be not *far better* for us to *obey* him, than to *disobey* him. And if our *Nature* is so framed, as not to be effectually persuaded to *Obedience*, without the Motives of *everlasting Rewards* and *Punishments*, it is at least *highly credible*, that there are such: Because it would be *unworthy* of God, so to frame the Nature of one of his *noblest Creatures*, as to render it incapable of being governed by him without *Falshood* and *Deceit*.

III. That there is a *future Happiness* reserved for good Men in the *other* World, is highly probable from those *Desires* and *Expectations* of it, which do so *generally* and *naturally* arise in *pure* and *virtuous* Minds. We rarely, if ever, read of any virtuous Man of whatsoever Nation, or Religion, or Sect of Philosophers, whose Mind hath not been winged with earnest Hopes and Desires of *future Happiness*; and I know none that have ever *denied*, or *despaired* of it, but only such as have first *debauched* and *vitiated* the Principles of their own Nature. Such were the *Sadducees* and *Epicureans*, Sects that had drowned all that was *human* in them in *Sensuality* and *Voluptuousness*, and are branded upon Record for their shameful Indulgence to their own *brutish Genius*: And such are no *Standards* of human Nature, but ought rather to be looked upon as *Monsters* of Men; and therefore as we do not think it *natural* to Men, to be born with six Fingers upon one Hand, though there have been many such *monstrous* and *unnatural* Births; so neither ought we to judge either of what is *natural* or *unnatural* to Men, by those *human Brutes*, who by their perpetual wallowing in the *Pleasures* of the *Body* have monstrously *disfigured* their own Natures, and *dissolved* all that Reason, by which they are constituted *Men*, into a mere *sensual* Sagacity of catering for the Appetites of the *Flesh*. If we would know therefore what is *human* and *natural* to us, we must take our Measures from those who are *least depraved*, and are most conformable to the Laws of a *rational Nature*; who have preserved the *natural* Subordination of their *Faculties*, and reduced their *Passions* and *Appetites* under the Empire of their *Reason*: And these are the Men whom we call *virtuous*, and who, because they live in the Exercise of those *noble Virtues* which are proper to us *Men*, are to be looked upon as the *Standards* of human Nature: By whom alone we can judge of what is *natural* and *unnatural* to us. Now *Virtue*, and the Desires and Hopes of *Immortality* are so near ally'd, that like *Hippocrates*'s Twins, they live and die together. For though while Men live a *brutish* and *sensual* Life, their future *Hopes* are usually drowned in their present *Enjoyments*; yet when once they recover out of this *unnatural* State, and begin to live virtuously like *reasonable* Beings, immediately they feel great Desires and Expectations of a *future Happiness*, springing up in their Minds, and rising higher and higher, proportionable to their

Progress

Progress is in *Virtue* and *true Goodness*. Which is a plain Evidence, that these *Hopes* and *Desires* are *natural* to us, and that they are interwoven by the great Creator in the Frame and Constitution of our *Souls*. Now how can it consist with the Goodness of God, to implant such *Desires* and *Hopes* in our Natures and then to withold from them the only *Object* that can suit and satisfie them? As if it were a Recreation to him, to sit above in the Heavens, and behold the *Work of his Hands* spending it self in *weary Struglings* towards him, and *gasping*, all the while it continues in Being, after an Happiness it shall never enjoy. As for other Beings, we see they have no *natural* Desire in vain; the good God having so ordered Things, that there are *Objects* in Nature apportioned to all their *natural* Appetites: But if there be no State of *Happiness* reserved for good Men in the *other* World, we are by a *natural Principle* most strongly inclined to that which we can *never* attain to: As if God had purposely framed us with such Inclinations, that we migh be perpetually *tormented* between those two Passions *Desire* and *Despair*, an earnest *Propension* after a future Happiness, and an utter *Incapacity* of ever enjoying it: As if *Nature* it self, whereby all *other* Beings are disposed to their *Perfection*, did serve only in *Mankind* to make them *miserable*; and which is more considerable, as if *Virtue*, which is the *Perfection* of Nature, did only contribute to our *Infelicity*, by raising in us *Desires* and *Expectations*, which without a *future* Happiness must be for ever *baffled* and *disappointed*. For if there be no future Happiness, either we *may* know it, or we may *not*; if we may *not* know it, why should we think *that* which reflects so much Dishonour upon God, *viz.* that he hath created in us Desires and Expectations, only to *mock* and *tantalize* them? But if we may know it, then do these Desires and Expectations seem to be created in us on purpose to *torment* us. For, for what other End can we desire to be *eternally happy*, who are only brought forth into the Light to be 'ere long extinguished, and shut up in everlasting Darkness? The Consideration of which must needs be an exceeding Torture and *Affliction* to us.

III. That there is a *future Happiness* reserved for good Men, is evident from the *Justice* and *Equity* of the divine Providence. That God is a most *just* and *righteous* Governour, is acknowledged by all that believe there is a God, and that he *rules* and *governs* the World: And if it be so, then his *Justice* must first or last discover it self in distributing *Rewards* and *Punishments* to Men, according as they *obey*, or *violate* the Laws of his Government. For what *Justice* can he express in governing the World, if he rules at *random*; if he never makes any *Difference* between the good and the bad, but rewards and punishes his Subjects *promiscuously*, without any *Distinction* between the Loyal and Rebellious? And yet in the *ordinary Course* of divine Providence in *this* World, we see little or no *Distinction* made between them; but as the *wise Man* hath observed, Eccl. ix. 2. *All Things come alike to all*, so that we cannot know God's *Love* or *Hatred* by any Thing that is before us; nay, many Times we see the *wicked*, as the Psalmist describes them, flourishing *like a green Bay-Tree*, Psal. xxxvii. 35. whilst the *righteous* are sorely *oppressed* and *crushed* under the Triumphal Chariots of their barbarous Enemies. So that were there no other State of Things, but what we *see* before us; it would be impossible for us, to give any tolerable Account of the *just Retributions* of the divine Providence. For if when we have all acted our Parts upon this *Stage* of Time, we were to *lie down* together, and sleep for ever in the Dust; how many Millions of *good Men* are there that have thought nothing too *dear* for God, and have not only sacrificed their *Lust*, but their *Lives* and *Fortunes* to his Service, who would have no other Recompence for so doing, but a *miserable* Life, and a *woeful* Death, and an *obscure* and *dishonourable* Grave? And on the contrary, how many Millions of Millions of *wicked Men* are there, whose whole Lives have been nothing but one continued Act of *Rebellion* against God, who have *blasphemed* his Honour, and *affronted* his Authority,

Authority, and openly *contemned* all the Laws of his Government; and yet would undergo no other *Punishment* for so doing, but only to live *prosperously*, to die *quietly*, and then to be *gloriously* enshrined in Monuments of Marble? And can we think *this*, and at the same Time believe, that there is a *righteous Providence* which superintends the Affairs of the World? Certainly, If not to govern this *material* World, and to put Things into such a *regular Course* as may be suitable to their Natures, and the Operations for which they are designed, would argue some Defect of *Wisdom* in God; then doubtless, not to compensate *Virtue* and *Vice*, and adjust Things suitably to their Qualifications; but thus crosly to couple *Prosperity* with *Vice*, and *Misery* with *Virtue*, would argue him deficient both in *Wisdom*, and *Goodness*, and *Justice*. And perhaps it would be no less expedient, with *Epicurus* to deny all *Providence*, than to ascribe to it such *Defects*; it being less unworthy of the divine Nature to *neglect* the Universe altogether, than to administer human Affairs with so much *Injustice* and *Irregularity*. So that either we must deny *Providence*, or (which is worse) deny the *Justice* of it; or believe that there is a *future State*, wherein all Things shall be adjusted, and *good* Men crowned with the *Rewards* of their Obedience, and the *Wicked* undergo the *Punishment* of their own Follies. For this we are sure of, that the Judge of all the World will do *righteously*, and that first or last he will distribute his *Rewards* and *Punishments*, according to the *Merit* and *Demerit* of his Subjects: And therefore because we see he doth not ordinarily do it in *this* World, we have great Reason to conclude, that he will do it effectually in the World *to come*.

Fourthly and *lastly*, That there is a State of *future Happiness* prepared for *good* Men, is evident from the *Revelation* of his Will, which God hath made to us by *Jesus Christ*. And this, I confess, is the most concluding Argument of all: As for the former Arguments, they render the Case so highly *probable*, that this at least must be acknowledged, that we have far more Reason to *believe* and *expect* a *future Happiness*, than we have to *doubt* or *despair* of it: But as for this last, it puts all out of *Question*, and leaves us no Pretence of Reason why we should *doubt* or *suspect* it. For *eternal Happiness* and *Salvation*, is the great Blessing which our Saviour hath promised us, to encourage us to *Perseverance* in Well-doing; and in that *everlasting Gospel* which he preached to the World, he hath in the Name of God proposed to us a Heaven of endless Joys and Felicities, and *brought Life and Immortality to Light*. So that if he were *commissioned* from God to make this great Proposal to Mankind, we have as much *Security* of a future Happiness, as we can have of the *Truth* of God; which is the Foundation of all the *Certainty* we have, whether in Philosophy or Divinity. Now that he was *commissioned* from God to promise what he did to us is apparent, because God himself by sundry Voices from Heaven *declared* him to be his Ambassador to the World; and proclaimed him *his beloved Son in whom he was well pleased*, and whom he had substituted the *supreme Minister* of his Grace and Goodness to Mankind; and what he declared in *Words*, he also demonstrated in *Deeds*. For when Christ was baptized, God sent down his *holy Spirit* upon him in a bright shining Flame, which spreading it self round his Head encircled his Brows, like a Crown of Sun-beams, and remained upon him: Which *glorious Appearance* answering to that *visible Glory*, by which God appeared from between the Cherubims, declared him to be the Temple of God, in whom the *Fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily*, and in which he meant to take his Residence for ever. And accordingly after this visible *Shechinah*, or Glory disappeared, we find most *palpable* and *apparent* Signs of the Presence of *God* in him; for by this it was that he cured the *Sick*, and calmed the *Seas*, and raised the *Dead*, and wrought all those *wondrous Works* by which he proved his Mission from above. For so we are told, that he *went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil, for God was with him*, Acts x. 38. And after all the *Miracles* that he did in his *Life*, by this Pow-

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er and Presence of God that was in him, being barbarously murdered, he *rose* from the *Dead* by the same Power, and *ascended* triumphantly to *Heaven*. Of the Truth of all which we have as *clear* and *credible* Testimony as ever was given to any Matters of Fact; the Report of them being handed down to us from those who were *Eye* and *Ear-Witnesses*; who in the Defence of what they testified exposed themselves to infinite *Hazards*, and at last confirmed their Testimony with their *dearest Blood*; which is the greatest *Security*, that any Witness can possibly give of his Honesty. For what should move them to *testifie* these Things, had they not known them to be *true?* It was apparently their *temporal* Interests to have concealed them; and their *Religion*, in which their *eternal* Interest was involved, prohibited them all wilfulful *Lying* under the Penalty of an endless *Damnation:* And would any Men in their Wits have maintained a known *Imposture*, when they were assured before-hand, that all they should gain by it was to *die* for it *here*, and to be *damned* for it *hereafter?* And if their Testimony be *true*, as we have all manner of Reason to *believe* it is, then what they testifie doth plainly denote the blessed *Jesus* to be the *Holy one of God*; from whom, as from his most holy Habitation, God would hereafter communicate all his Blessings to Mankind. And if so, then we are sure of eternal Life, upon Condition of our *patient continuance in well doing:* For whatsoever he hath promised us, he must have promised us from God, who dwelt in the sacred Temple of his Body, and from thence pronounced the *Oracles* of his Grace and Goodness, and manifested himself perpetually by sundry *miraculous Effects*.

From the Consideration of our *future Happiness*, many useful Inferences may be raised: And First, from hence we may perceive, what an *unreasonable* Thing it is for us *Christians*, immoderately to doat upon the *World*. I confess, if our *chief*, or *only* Interest were involved in *this* World, and we had no *Hopes* beyond the *Grave*; there were then some *Excuse* to be made for *immoderate* Sollicitude about the trifling Concerns of this *present Life:* But when it is so apparent, that we are born to *higher* Hopes, and are here but *Candidates*, and *Probationers* for an everlasting Preferment in the highest *Heaven*; methinks the Sense of it should make us blush at our own *Follies*, to think how *busie* we are in pursuing the fading *Vanities* of *this* World, whilst the great Interest of our *Eternity* is wholly *neglected* and *forgotten*. Blessed God! Who would imagine, that in a World peopled with *immortal Spirits* that must live for ever in unconceivable *Happiness* or *Misery*, the greatest Number of us should be such utter *Strangers* to the Thoughts, and Concerns of *another World?* That we who are so *industrious* in our *temporal* Affairs, as not to slip any Opportunity of *Gain*; but are so ready to court every Occasion, that tends to advance these our *momentary* Pleasures, Profits and Honours, should be regardless of those *celestial* Joys, which if we fall short of, we are *undone* for ever; and which if we arrive to, we shall be as *happy* as all the Beatitudes of an immortal *Heaven* can make us! O inconsiderate Beings that we are! Where is the *Reason* that constitutes us *Men*, that we should chuse thus *crosly* to the Nature of Things, when there is so vast a *Disproportion* between the Objects of our Choice, between *Heaven* and *Earth*, between *Moments* and *Eternity*, between the *hungry* and *withering* Joys of *this* World, and the *eternally ravishing* Pleasures of the World to *come?* Methinks if we had any Dram of *Reason* left in us, the Consideration that we are born to an *immortal* Crown, which nothing but our own *Folly* can differize us of, were enough to inspire us with a noble *Disdain* of all these bewitching *Vanities* about us; and to make us look upon them as Things *beneath* us, Toys and Trifles, not worthy our scrambling for. When we consider, that there is an *Heaven* of *endless Joys* prepared for us, which if we will we may make as sure of, as we can of our own *Beings*; methinks so *vast* an *Hope* should raise our groveling Thoughts so high above this World, that when we look down upon it, it should disappear, or look like a thin blew Landskip next to *Nothing*;

thing; and all the *Hurries* and *Scramblings* of silly Mortals for little Parcels of Earth, should seem as *trifling* and *inconsiderable* to us, as the Toils and Labours of a little World of Ants about a Mole-hill. For how is it possible almost, that such little *Impertinencies* should take up our Thoughts, who have an *Eternity* of *Weal* and *Woe* before us? And when we have all that an *everlasting Heaven* means, to busie our Thoughts, and employ our Cares about, how can we engage with so much Zeal and Vigour in the *petty Affairs* of this World? Foolish and unwise that we are! Thus to neglect our most *important* Interests for every *impertinent* Trifle; to sell our Souls for a little Money, and give immortal *Hallelujahs* for a Song! And when we are born to such *infinite* Hopes, to chuse *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Fate, and leave *Crowns* and *Scepters* to live among the Savage *Herds* of the Wilderness.

II. From hence we may learn, how *vigorous* and *industrious* we ought to be in discharging the Duties of our Religion. For how can we think any *Pains* too much, when an everlasting *Heaven* is the Reward of our Labour? What a poor Thing is it, that we should grudge to spend a few *Moments* here in the *severest* Exercises of *Holiness* and *Vertue*; when within this little While, in consideration of our short *Pains*, we shall have nothing else to do throughout a long and blessed *Eternity*, but to enjoy a Heaven of *pure Pleasures*; and bathe our Faculties for ever in fresh Delights; to converse with the Fountain of all *Love* and *Goodness*, and warble eternally Praises to him; and in the Vision of his *Beauty* and *Goodness* to live in everlasting Raptures of *Joy* and *Love*? O my Soul! what though thou *toilest* and *labourest* now to climb the everlasting Hills! yet be of good Heart, for it will not be long before thou art at the Top, where thou wilt find such *pleasant* Gales, and *glorious* Prospects as will make thee *infinite* Amends for all: Yea, though the *Toil* thou undergoest were abundantly *more* than it is; though instead of the Labour of *mortifying* thy Lusts, and living *soberly*, *righteously*, and *godly*, thy Task were to row in the *Gallies*, or dig in the *Mines* for a thousand Years together, yet methinks the Consideration that Heaven will be at last thy *Reward*, should be enough to *sweeten*, and *endear* it. O would we but often represent to our Minds the *glorious* Things of *another* World, what *holy Fervours* would such charming Thoughts kindle within us? And with how much *Spirit* and *Vigour* would they carry us through the weary Stages of our Duty? what *Lust* is there so dear to us, that we should not *willingly* sacrifice to the Hopes of *Immortality*? What Duty so difficult, that we should not *chearfully* undergo, while the Crown of *Glory* is in our Eye? Surely did we but look more frequently to the *Recompense of Reward*, we should be all Life, and Spirit, and wing; our *sluggish* Souls would be inspired with an Angelical *Vigour*, and *Activity*; and we should run with *Alacrity*, as well as *Patience*, *the race that is set before us:* But alass! we look upon our *Reward* as a Thing a great way *off*; and 'tis, I confess, reserved for us within that invisible World whereinto our dull *Sense* is not able to penetrate; which is the Reason that we are not so *vigorously* affected with it. Wherefore to make amends for this Disadvantage, let us often revive the Considerations of *Eternity* upon our Minds, and inculcate the *Reality* and *Certainty* of our future Weal or Woe, together with the great *Weight* and *Importance* of them: Let us thus reason with ourselves; *O my Soul! If it be so certain as it is, that there are such unspeakable Joys reserved for good Men, and such intolerable Miseries for the Wicked; why should not these Things be to me, as if they were already present? Why should I not be as much afraid to sin, as if the Gates of Hell stood open before me, and I saw the astonishing Miseries of those damned Ghosts that are weltring in the Flames of it? And why should I not as chearfully comply with my Duty, as if I had now a full Prospect of the Regions of Happiness, and I saw the great Jesus at the right Hand of God with Diadems of Glory in his Hand, to crown those pure and blessed Spirits, who have been his faithful Servants to the Death?* And doubtless would we but *inure* our Minds a little to such Thoughts as these, they would wonder-

fully

fully *actuate* all the Powers of our Souls, and be continually inspiring us with new *Vigour* in the Ways of *Holiness* and *Virtue:* For what Difficulties are there that can daunt our good Resolutions, while they are animated with this Persuasion, that if we *have our Fruit unto Holiness, our End shall be everlasting Life?* Rom. vi. 22.

III. From hence we may perceive, how *upright* and *sincere* we ought to be in all our Professions and Actions. For if there be such an *Happiness* reserved for us in Heaven, then doubtless, if we intend to partake of it, we must be *sincerely good*; because he that is the Donor of this glorious Reward, is a God that *searcheth the Heart*, and *trieth the Reins*, and is a curious Observer of our *secret* Thoughts, and most *retired* Actions; and consequently will *reward* us, not according to what we *seem* to be, but to what we *really are.* We may possibly cheat *Men* into a fair Opinion of us, by disguising our selves in a *Form of Godliness*, and facing our Conversation with *specious Pretences* of Piety: But *that* God, with whom we have to do, sees through all *Dawbings*, and *Fucus*'s of Hypocrisy; and can easily discern a rotten *Core*, through the most beautiful *Rind*, that can be distended over it. So that we can never hope to obtain *His* Blessing, as *Jacob* did his blind Father's, by a counterfeit Voice, or exteriour Disguise of Religion: For all the fair Vizards of *Hypocrisy* are so far from *hiding* our Blemishes from *God*, that they lay them more *open* to his all-seeing Eye, and make them appear more *monstrous* and *deformed.* Wherefore, unless we are *really good*, we were better not to *seem* to be so; for mere *Pretences* of Piety will be so far from procuring *Salvation* for us, that they will but enhance and aggravate our *Condemnation*, and sink and plunge us deeper into *Hell*, instead of obtaining any Entrance for us into the Kingdom of *Heaven.* Since therefore there is such an *immortal Reward* prepared for us in the World to come, if we love *our selves*, or have any Regard for our most *important* Interest, we cannot but be in *good Earnest* for Heaven; and if we are so, we shall be *sincere* and *upright* in all our Actions, and the great Design of our Lives will be to *approve* our selves to *God*, and our own *Consciences.* If by giving *Alms* we hope to increase our Stock in that great *Bank* of Bliss above, we shall not care so much to *blow a Trumpet* when we do it, that so the World may take Notice of, and praise our Bounty; but our Rejoycing will be this, that we have *approved* our selves to *God*, from whom we expect the Reward of our *Obedience.* If we *abstain* from Sin with Respect to the *future* Recompence, we shall do it in *private*, as well as in the View of the *World*; knowing that where-ever we are, we are under *God's Eye*, who alone can make us happy, or miserable for ever. In a word, if we seriously mind the Glory that is set before us, we shall be as curious of our *Thoughts*, and secret *Purposes*, as if they were to be exposed upon an open Theatre; considering that they are all *open* and *naked* to that *God with whom we have to do*, and upon whom the Hope of our immortal Happiness depends. For to what Purpose should we dissemble and play the *Hypocrites*, unless we could impose upon the *Almighty*, and make him believe that we are good, when we are not, and so *steal* to Heaven in a Vizard?

Fourthly and *lastly*, From hence 'tis visible, what great Reason we have to be *chearful* under the *Afflictions* and *Miseries* of this World; considering what *Glories* and *Felicities* there are prepared for us in the World to come: Indeed all the *Miseries* of this World are *more* or *less*, as we have more or less Reason to be *supported* under them; but when we consider, that our Time here is but a *Moment*, compared with our *everlasting* Abode in the World to come, our *present* Happiness and Misery will appear to be very *inconsiderable.* We are now upon our *Journey* towards our heavenly Country and it is no great matter how rough the Way is, provided that *Heaven* be our Journey's End: For though here we *want* many of those Accommodations which we may *expect*, and *desire*; yet this is but the common Fate of *Travellers*,

vellers, and we muſt be *contented* to take Things as we find them, and not ook to have every Thing juſt to our Mind. But all theſe *Difficulties* and *Inconveniencies* will ſhortly be *over*, and after a few Days will be quite *forgotten*, and be to us as if they *never* had been: And when we are ſafely landed in our *own Country*, we ſhall look back from the Shore with *Pleaſure* and *Delight* upon thoſe boiſterous Seas which we have eſcaped, and for ever *bleſs* the Storms and Winds that drove us thither. Wherefore hold, O my *Faith* and *Patience*, a little longer, and your Work will ſoon be at an End; and all my *Sighs* and *Groans* within a few Moments will expire into everlaſting *Songs* and *Hallelujahs:* Νῦν μὲν αἱ ἡμέραὶ ἡμῶν πονηραι, ἄλλαί δὲ τινες εἰσὶν ἀγαθαὶ ἃς νὺξ ȣ̓ διακόπτοι. ἔσαι γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς αὐτῶν φῶς αἰώνιον, καταλάμπων αὐτὰς τῷ φωτὶ τȣ̃ ἑαυτȣ̃ δόξης. *Now our Days are dark and gloomy, but the bright glorious Day is dawning, which Night ſhall never interrupt; for God himſelf is the eternal Sun, that enlightens us with the bright Rays of his own Glory.* And what is a little cloudy Weather compared with an everlaſting Sun-ſhine? Doubtleſs theſe *light Afflictions which are but for a Moment, are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that ſhall be revealed in us.* Let us therefore comfort our ſelves with theſe Things, and while we are groaning under the *Miſeries* of this Life, let us *encourage* our ſelves with this Conſideration, that within a little while all our *Tears* ſhall be wiped from our *Eyes*, and there ſhall be an *everlaſting* Period put to all our *Sorrows* and *Miſeries*; when we ſhall be removed from all the Troubles and Temptations of a *wicked* and *ill-natur'd* World, be paſt all *Storms*, and ſecured from all further Danger of *Shipwreck*, and be ſafely landed in the Regions of *Bliſs* and *Immortality*. And can we complain of the *Foulneſs* of a Way, that leads into a *Paradiſe* of endleſs Delights; and not chearfully undergo theſe *ſhort* though *bitter* Throes, which like the *Virgin-Mother's*, will quickly end in Songs, and everlaſting *Magnificats?* Chear up therefore, O my creſt-fallen Soul, for thy *bitter Paſſion* will ſoon be at an End; and though now thou art ſailing in a *tempeſtuous Sea*, yet a few Leagues off lies that *bleſſed Port*, where thou ſhalt be *crowned* as ſoon as thou art *landed*; and then the *Remembrance* of the *Storms* thou haſt paſſed will contribute to the *Triumphs* of thy *Coronation*; and all the *bad Entertainments* thou meeteſt with in this Life will but make Earth more *loathſome* to thee while thou art here, and Heaven more welcome when thou comeſt there; and theſe thy *light Afflictions, which are but for a moment, will work for thee a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory*, 2 Cor. iv. 17.

Chap. V.

Of the Neceſſity *of* Mortification, *to the obtaining of* eternal *Life.*

I Come now to the *ſecond* Thing propoſed, namely, that the *eternal* Life and Happineſs of good Men depends upon their *mortifying* the Deeds of the Body; and that it doth ſo, I ſhall endeavour to prove.

Firſt, from God's *Ordination* and *Appointment*.

Secondly, From the *Nature* of the Thing.

I. From God's *Ordination* and *Appointment*. God, who is the ſupreme Governour of the World, hath propoſed *eternal Life*, as an Encouragement to thoſe who by *patient Continuance in well-doing, ſeek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality:* And ſuppoſing that *wicked* Men could enjoy the Happineſs of the other World, yet it would be inconſiſtent with the *Wiſdom* of his Government to admit them to it. For ſhould he reward *Offenders* with eternal Happineſs, who would be afraid of offending him? And if once he

rules with such a *slack* and *indulgent* Rein, as to take away all Reason of *Fear* from his Subjects, his *Government* must immediately dissolve into *Anarchy* and *Confusion.* And therefore to prevent this, he hath fairly *warned* us by his reiterated *Threats*, that if we live in *Disobedience* to his Laws, we shall be for ever *banished* from that Kingdom of *Happiness* which he hath prepared for those that *love* and *fear* him: So in *Rom.* viii. 13. we are assured, that if *we live after the Flesh, we shall die:* And in *Gal.* v. 19, 20, 21. we are told that *the Works of the Flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in Times past, that they which do such Things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God:* And so 1 *Cor.* vi. 9, 10. *Know ye not* (says the Apostle) *that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with Mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God:* And to the same purpose the same Apostle tells us, that *no whoremonger, nor unclean Person, nor covetous Man who is an Idolater, hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of God,* Ephes. v. 5. All which dreadful *Denunciations* must be supposed to be *conditional*; for else they are not consistent with the Promise of *Pardon* to those that truly *repent:* So that the Meaning of them is plainly this, that if we persevere in these Lusts of the Flesh, and do *not mortify* them, we shall have no Part nor Portion in the Kingdom of God. Hence the Apostle exhorts us, *Col.* iii. 5, 6. *Mortify therefore your Members which are upon the Earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate Affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which Things sake the Wrath of God cometh on the Children of Disobedience:* Which implies, that if they *did mortify* these Lusts, the Wrath of God should not come upon them; but if they *did not*, they should be liable to the divine Indignation among the Children of *Disobedience.* By all which it is apparent, that according to God's free *Ordination* and Appointment, our eternal *Happiness* and *Welfare* depends upon our *mortifying* the Deeds of the Body, since God hath so ordained, that if we *do* mortify them, we shall *live*, and that if we *do not*, we shall be for ever *excommunicated* from the Regions of Life and Immortality.

II. This is also apparent from the *Nature* of the Thing: For if God had not excluded those that live in their Sins from eternal Life, by his own free *Ordination*; yet they must have been excluded, the *future* Happiness being so *inconsistent* with a *vicious* State, that it is impossible ever to *reconcile* them. For the Thing itself implies a *Contradiction*, and is not an Object of any *Power*, no not of *Omnipotence* it self; and God may as well make *White* to be *Black* while it is *White*, as a *vicious* Soul to be *happy* while it is *vicious.* For Happiness is a *relative* Thing, and doth in its own *Nature* imply a Correspondence and Agreement between the *Faculty* and the *Object*; and be the *Object* never so good in itself, yet if it doth not *agree* with the *Faculty* whereunto it is objected, it is *Misery* and *Affliction* to it. Though a Man should be entertain'd with all the delicate Relishes of *Musick*, yet if he hath not a *musical Ear*, it will be but a *tedious ungrateful* Din to him: And though his *Appetite* should be courted with all the *rich Varieties* in Nature; yet if they do not *agree* with his coarse and homely Palate, he will *distaste* and *nauseate* them. And so if a Man should be placed in *Heaven* among all the Joys with which that *blessed State* abounds; yet unless his *Mind* and *Temper* did *suit* and *agree* with them, they would all be so many *Miseries* and *Torments* to him; he would be afflicted even in *Abraham's* Bosom, and grope for Heaven in the midst of Paradise; and it would be impossible for him to be *pleased* with his Condition, till the *Genius* and *Temper* of his Mind were *alter'd*, and the *Dispositions* of his Soul were *reconciled* to that heavenly State. So that if we can demonstrate that there is and must be *Antipathy* and *Disagreement*

ment in *wicked* Souls to the *future Happiness*; it will then be apparent from the *Nature*, and *Reason* of the Thing, that our Enjoyment of the future Happiness depends upon our ceasing to be *wicked*; or which is all one, upon our *mortifying* the Deeds of the Flesh. Now to evidence this Disagreement between *wicked* Souls, and the *heavenly* State, I shall do these three Things;

First, shew *wherein* the Felicities of the *future State* do consist.

Secondly, what the Temper and Disposition of wicked Souls will be in the *future State*.

Thirdly, how *contrary* such a Temper and Disposition must be unto such *Felicities*.

I. I am to shew *wherein* the Felicities of the *future State* do consist. And here I shall not presume to give you a particular Description of *Heaven*, the Felicities whereof the Apostle tells us are *ineffable*; but shall content my self to give you the *general* Account of it, which I find in the Revelation of the *Gospel*. In general therefore we may be secure of this, that *Heaven* is such an Happiness as is most suitable to a *rational* Nature; it being designed and prepared for *reasonable* Beings, to whom (as I have shewed) it would not be a Heaven, if it were not *agreeable* to their Natures. For should God have provided for us a Heaven of *sensual Felicities*, to gratifie the unbounded Lickorishness of our *carnal* Appetites; it would have been a Happiness fitter for *Beasts* than *Men*: And whilst our *sensual* and *brutish* Part had been feasted with everlasting Varieties of *carnal* Pleasures, our *intellectual* Powers, which are the *noblest* Ingredients of our Natures, must have pined away a long Eternity, for want of those Joys and Delights, which alone are *proper* and *agreeable* to their Natures. Now our *proper* Happiness, as we are *reasonable* Beings, consists in being perfectly *rational*, and in the *Union* of our Understandings, Wills, and Affections, with such Objects as are most agreeable to our *rational* Natures? And what is it to be perfectly *rational*, but to reason truly according to the *Nature* of Things; and to choose and refuse, and love and hate according to the Dictates of *true Reason*? And what is it to have our Understandings, Wills, and Affections *united* to such Objects as are most *agreeable* to our *reasonable* Natures, but only to *know* that which is most *worthy* to be known, and to *choose* and *love* that which is most *worthy* to be chosen and loved? When therefore our *Understanding* is become so *clear* and *vigorous*, as to *reason* aright, and penetrate into the *Natures* of Things; and our *Wills*, and *Affections* are perfectly *compliant* and *harmonious* with it; and all these are in conjunction with *God*, the Fountain of all *Truth* and *Goodness*; we are then arrived to the *heavenly* State of *reasonable* Natures. And therefore all that is positively affirmed of the *heavenly Happiness* in the Gospel, is only this; that it consists in our *seeing God*, and loving and resembling him, and being for ever associated with those *blessed Spirits*, that see and love and resemble him as well as *We*. And this doubtless is such a *Felicity*, as no mortal Language can express: For how will my *Understanding* triumph, when it is once emerged out of all the *Mists* and *Clouds*, with which it is here surrounded, into the clear Heaven of *Vision*, where it shall have a free and uninterrupted Prospect throughout the whole *Horizon* of *Truth*; when God and Heaven, and all the Mysteries of the other World shall be always *present* to my ravished Thoughts; how *hail* and *sound*, how *light* and *expedite* will my Soul be, when it is disentangled from all those *unreasonable Passions*, which here do clog and disease her? When all her jarring Faculties shall be reduced into a *perfect Harmony*, what a Heaven of *Content* and *Peace* will there spring up within her own Bosom? And when she is thus contemper'd to the *divine* Perfection, and inspired throughout with a *God-like* Nature, in what Raptures of *Love* and Extasies of *Joys* will she converse with *God* and *blessed Spirits*? This doubtless, if there were no more, is enough to make the *Heavenly*

venly State unſpeakably *happy* and *bleſſed:* And this together with perfect Freedom from *Pains* and *Miſery* and *Death*, is all of Heaven that God hath made known to us in his Goſpel: Here we are told that we ſhall be made *perfect*, that we ſhall *ſee* as we are *ſeen*, and *know* as we are *known*, and *behold* him that is *inviſible* face to face: For *yet it doth not appear what we ſhall be*, ſays St. *John*, *but we know that when he ſhall appear*, *we ſhall be like him*, *for we ſhall ſee him as he is*, 1 Epiſt. iii. 2. There may be, and doubtleſs are ſundry *additional* Felicities to theſe; but in theſe it is apparent the main of Heaven doth conſiſt, becauſe theſe are all that God hath plainly *revealed*, and made *known* to us.

II. The next Thing propoſed was to ſhew, what the Temper and Diſpoſition of *wicked Souls* will be in the *future State*. And this may be eaſily gathered, by conſidering wherein a *wicked* Temper *conſiſts*; for doubtleſs with the *ſame* Temper of Mind that we are of in *this* World, we ſhall go into the *other:* For merely by *going* into the *other* World, Men cannot be alter'd as to their *main State*, though they may be perfected as to thoſe good Diſpoſitions that were here *begun*; ſo that he that is wicked *here* will be wicked *there* too, and that *ſame* Diſpoſition of Mind that we carry with us to our *Graves*, we ſhall retain with us in *Eternity*. If therefore we would know, what the Temper of a *wicked* Soul will be in the *future State*, our beſt Way will be to enquire, what it is that we call a *wicked* Temper here; becauſe it will be the *ſame* here, and hereafter. Now a *wicked* Temper conſiſts of two Things; Firſt, of *Senſuality*, and ſecondly, of *Deviliſhneſs*. By *Senſuality*, I mean an *immoderate* Propenſion of the *Soul* to the Pleaſures of the *Body*; ſuch an *Head-ſtrong* Propenſion, as wholly diverts the Soul from all her *nobler Delights* to the *brutiſh Pleaſures* of Intemperance and Wantonneſs and Gluttony, together with thoſe other *Luſts* that are ſubſervient to them, ſuch as Fraud and Covetouſneſs and Ambition, and the like: By *Deviliſhneſs*, I mean thoſe *ſpiritual Wickedneſſes*, which do not ſo much depend upon the *Body* as the former, but are more immediately centered in the *Soul*, ſuch as Pride, and Malice, and Wrath, and Envy, and Hatred, and Revenge, *&c.* which are the Sins of the *Devil*, by which thoſe once *glorious* and *bleſſed* Spirits were transformed into *Fiends* and *Furies*. Theſe are the venomous *Ingredients* of which a *wicked* Temper is compoſed. If you enquire therefore what the Temper of a *wicked* Soul will be in the *future State*; I anſwer, it will be the ſame *there* that it is here; that is, it will be *ſenſual* and *deviliſh*. As for the *latter*, there can be no doubt of it; for *Deviliſhneſs*, being immediately ſubjected in the *Soul* cannot be ſuppoſed to be *ſeparated* from her by her Separation from the *Body*; and may as well abide in *naked* and *ſeparated Spirits*, as it doth in the Apoſtate *Angels*. And as for *Senſuality*, though it cannot be ſuppoſed that a *Soul* ſhould retain the Appetites of the *Body*, after it is *ſeparated* from it; yet having wholly abandon'd it ſelf to *corporeal* Pleaſures while it was in the *Body*, it may, and doubtleſs will retain a *vehement Hankering* after a Reunion with it, which is the only *Senſuality*, that a *ſeparated* Soul is capable of. For when ſhe comes into the World of *Spirits*, her former *accuſtoming* her ſelf unto the Pleaſures of the *Body* will have ſo *debauched* and *vitiated* her Appetite, that ſhe will be *incapable* of reliſhing any other Pleaſures, but what are *carnal* and *ſenſual*, which becauſe ſhe cannot enjoy but in the *Body*, ſhe muſt needs retain an *earneſt* and *vehement* Longing to be re-united to it. For having never had any former Experience of the Pleaſures of *Spirits*, when ſhe comes into the *other* World, ſhe will find her ſelf miſerably *deſtitute* of all that can be *pleaſant* and *delightful* to her; and becauſe ſhe knows, that the only pleaſures ſhe can reliſh are ſuch as are not to be enjoyed, but in conjunction with the *Body*, therefore all her *Appetites* and *Longings* muſt needs unite into one outragious Deſire of being *embody'd* again, that ſo ſhe may repeat theſe *ſenſual* Pleaſures, and act over the *brutiſh* Scene anew. Which poſſibly may be the Reaſon, why ſuch ſenſual Souls have *appeared* ſo often

in *Church-yards* and *Charnel-houses*, Union with the Body being that which these wandering *Ghosts* have the most *eager* Affections to, and that they are most *loth* to be *separated* from; which makes them perpetually *hover* about, and *linger* after their dear Consort, the *Body*; the Impossibility of their *Re-union* with it not being able to *cure* them of their impotent *Desires*, but still they would fain be alive again. *Virgil*,

—Iterumque ad tarda reverti
Corpora: quæ lucis miseris tam dira cupido?

And this, I doubt not, was one great Reason of those extraordinary *Abstinencies*, and bodily *Severities* that were imposed by the *Primitive* Church; that by this Means they might gently *wean* the *Soul* from the Pleasures of the *Body*, and teach it *before-hand* to live upon the Delights of *separated* Spirits; that so it might drop into Eternity with *Ease* and *Willingness*, like ripe Fruit from the Tree; and that when it was arrived into the *other* World, it might not have its *Appetite* so *vitiated* with these *sensual* Delights, as to be *incapable* of relishing those *spiritual* Ones, and so be endlesly *tormented* with a fruitless Desire of *returning* to the Body again. This therefore from the whole is plain and apparent, that the Temper of *wicked* Souls in the *other* World will be much the same as it is in *this*; that is, *sensual* and *devilish*, made up of Rage and Spite, and Malice, together with a *vehement* Longing after the deserted *Body*, in which they enjoyed the only Pleasures they were *capable* of.

And having thus shew'd you, what are the *Felicities* of the *future State*, and what the Temper of *wicked* Souls will be in the *future State*; I now proceed,

III. To shew you, how *contrary* such a Temper and Disposition must be unto such *Felicities*. And indeed *Sensuality* and *Devilishness* are the only *Indispositions* for Heaven; but *such Indispositions* they are, that if upon an *impossible* Supposition a Soul could be admitted with them into the Habitations of the *Blessed*; she would not be *able* to relish one Pleasure there: Among all the Delights with which the *beatifick* State abounds, there would none be found that would please her *distemper'd* Palate, which lik a *feverish* Tongue, must disrelish and nauseate the sweetest Liquor, by Reason of its overflowing Gall. And hence the Apostle exhorting his Christian *Colossians*, to be *thankful* unto God for making them *meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in light*; tells them, that this was effected by God's *translating* them out of the Kingdom of *Darkness, into the Kingdom of his own dear Son*; that is, by enabling them to mortifie their Lusts, and inspiring them with the Graces of the Gospel: *Colos.* i. 12, 13. And this will evidently appear, if we consider the *particular Felicities* of which the heavenly State consists; which (as I have shewed above) consists, First, in the *Vision* of God: Secondly, in *our Likeness* or *Resemblance* to him: Thirdly, in the *Love* of Him; and Fourthly, in the *Society* of *pure* and *blessed* Spirits: To all which there is an utter *Antipathy* and *Disagreement* in every *sensual* and *devilish* Temper and Disposition.

I. In every *sensual* and *devilish* Mind, there is an *Antipathy* and *Contrariety* to the *Vision* of God; for the Sight of *God* can be pleasant unto none, but those who are in some Measure *contemper'd* to his Perfections, and *transformed* into his Likeness. While we are *unlike* him, and *contrary* to him, as we must needs be while we are *sensual* and *devilish*; the Sight of him would be more apt to *amaze* and *terrify*, than to *please* and *delight* us; for what *Pleasure* could a Soul take in the *Vision* of that *God*, whom she always *hated*, and could never endure to *think* of? Doubtless she would be so far from being *pleased* with the Sight of him, that it would be her *Grief* and *Torment* to behold him. The Sight of his *Purity* and *Holiness* would be so far from *delighting* her, that it would but *reproach* her *lewd* and *sordid* Degeneracy from the Temper

of a *pure* and *immortal* Spirit: The Vision of his *Mercy* and *Goodneſs* would be ſo far from *pleaſing* her, that it would but *upbraid* the horrid *Deviliſhneſs* of her own Diſpoſition: And which way ſoever ſhe turned her Eyes, ſhe would ſee nothing in God, but what did *libel* and *condemn* her own *Impurity* and *Wickedneſs*. And how is it poſſible, that ſuch a *Sight* ſhould ever be *pleaſing* unto ſuch a *Spectator?* Doubtleſs the *Viſion* of God, which is the Heaven of *God-like* Souls, would be a Hell to *wicked* Ones; it would chaſe them out of Heaven, if they were in it, and cauſe them to fly away from before the *Glory* of it, as Bats and Owls do from the Light of the Sun, and of their *own accords* to wrap their guilty Heads in the Shades of *eternal Darkneſs*, and *Deſpair*. For how could they endure the Sight of that God in whom, while they continue ſo *infinitely unlike* him, it is impoſſible they ſhould ſee any thing but Cauſes of *Horror* and *Confuſion?* For there muſt be in us ſome *Likeneſs* and *Reſemblance* of God, to diſpoſe us to behold him with *Pleaſure* and *Delight*. For as *Maximus Tyrius* hath well obſerved, the τὸ θεῖον, *the divine Nature which is not viſible to the Eye of Senſe*, Τὸ δὲ θεῖον ἀόρατον ὀφθαλμοῖς, μόνῳ δὲ τῷ τῆς ψυχῆς καλλίστῳ, καὶ καθαρωτάτῳ, καὶ νοεροτάτῳ, καὶ κουφοτάτῳ, καὶ πρεσβυτάτῳ ὁρατὸν δι' ὁμοιότητα. Diſſ. 1. *Is yet viſible to that in the Soul; which is moſt pure and beautiful, and ſublime, and noble, in reſpect of a certain Similitude and Cognation that is between them.* But where this Similitude is *wanting*, the Viſion of God will be rather a *Hell*, than a *Heaven:* If there be no *Correſpondence* between what we ſee in *God*, and what we are in our *ſelves*, his Glory may *confound* and *dazle* us; but it is impoſſible it ſhould *pleaſe* us: For what *Pleaſure* can we take in ſeeing that which is ſo infinitely *diſagreeable* to our Natures?

II. In every *ſenſual* and *deviliſh* Mind there is an utter *Indiſpoſition* and *Contrariety* to the *Love* of God; for all *Love* is founded in *Likeneſs*, and doth reſult out of ſome *Harmony* and *Reſemblance* that there is between the *Lover* and the *Beloved*. But what *Reſemblance* can there be between a *deviliſh* and *carnalized* Soul, and a *good* and *holy* God? And if there be none, *Light* and *Darkneſs*, or *Heaven* and *Hell* may as ſoon agree, as they. For how can a Soul, whoſe Affections are drenched in *Matter*, and wedded to the *Fleſh*, love the holy *God*, who is a *pure* and *ſpotleſs Spirit?* What Amity can there be in a *black*, and *deviliſh* Nature towards the moſt *kind* and *benign* Being in the World? Doubtleſs from ſuch a *Contrariety* of Natures there muſt neceſſarily ſpring mutual Antipathies and *Averſations*. So that could ſuch a Soul be admitted to the *Viſion* of God, ſhe would ſee nothing in him but what would *enrage* and *canker* her with Malice againſt him: The Sight of thoſe *glorius Perfections* in him, which are ſo *repugnant* to her own Nature, inſtead of *enamouring* her, would but boil up her Hatred into an higher Degree of *Averſation* to him. For even here we ſee, it is natural to *lewd* and *wicked* Men, to picture God by the *foul* and *monſtrous* Original of their own Tempers; and generally the Notion which they have of *him* is nothing but the Image of *themſelves*, which *Narciſſus*-like they fall in Love with because it repreſents what they moſt delight in, even their own darling and beloved *Luſts*. Which is a plain Argument that they cannot *love* God, till they have deformed him into their *own Likeneſs*, and with the *Æthiopians* copy'd him out in the Reſemblance of their own *black* and *deviliſh* Tempers. When therefore they ſhall ſee Him as *He is*, encircled about with his own Rays of *unſtained* and *immaculdte* Glory; the vaſt *Unlikeneſs* they will then diſcern between *Him* and *themſelves*, will doubtleſs *enrage* and *ſoure* their Spirits againſt him, and convert all their *Fondneſs* towards him into an utter *Antipathy* and *Averſation:* For ſo long as *He* continues what *He* is, and *they* what *they* are, there will be ſuch an *irreconcileable Contrariety* between them, that they muſt *hate* either God or themſelves, or elſe *love* Contraries at the ſame Time, which is impoſſible.

III. In every *ſenſual* and *deviliſh* Mind there is a ſtrong Indiſpoſition to their being made *like* unto God, *i. e.* there is the ſame Indiſpoſition in them

to their receiving the *Likeness* aud *Image* of God, as there is in *one contrary* to admit of *another*. Their *sensual* and *devilish* Dispositions will as naturally *resist* the tranforming Impressions of the divine *Purity* and *Goodness*, as *Fire* doth *Water*, or Moisture *Drought*: For the Image of *God* being a *moral Perfection*, must be impressed on us by the intervening Ministry of our *Understandings*, that is, by our Sight and Vision of him; and hence this Apostle gives the Reason why *we shall be like unto him* when he doth appear, because *we shall see him as he is*: 1 Joh. iii. 2. But the Sight of God, which *assimilates* us to him, must be accompanied with the *Love* of him, for it is *Love* that provokes to *Imitation*, and *Imitation* that *transforms* the Lover into the Image of the beloved. For though doubtless the *beatifick Vision* doth work far more effectually upon *prepared* Souls in the *other* Life, than the *Knowledge* of God doth in *this*; because *here* we see but in a *Glass darkly*, whereas *there* our Vision will be unspeably more *clear*, *intense*, and *vigorous*: Yet I doubt not but in assimilating us to God, it works in a *moral* and *rational* way; that is, by *vigorously affecting* our Wills with the Perfections of God, so as to stir us up to an *active Imitation* of them, and *efficaciously* to excite us to *transcribe* them into our own Natures; which it cannot be supposed to do, unless our Souls be in some Measure *predisposed* by Holiness and Purity to the *Love* of God, and of those glorious Perfections we shall then behold in him. For if we do not *love God*, the Sight of him will be so far from provoking us to *imitate* him, that it will *avert* us from him, and render us more *unimpressive* to the transforming Power of his Glory. 'Tis true, this *Vision* of God will *perfect* our *Likeness* to him, if it be *begun*; because then it will have a *prepared Subject* to act upon, a Soul that is *temper'd* and *dispos'd* to the Power of it, and to take Impression from it: But yet it will not *create* a Likeness where it never *was*, but will leave him that is *wicked* to be *wicked still*; he being an *incapable Subject* of its benign Iufluences, and altogether *indisposed* to be wrought upon by it. For as the *Sun* enlightens not the inward Parts of an impervious *Dunghill*, and hath no other Effect upon it, but only to draw out its filthy *Reeks* and *Steams*; though as soon as he lifts his Head above the Hemisphere, he immediately transforms into his own *Likeness* all that vast Space whither he can diffuse his Beams, and turns it into a Region of *Light*: Even so the *divine Glory* and *Beauty*, which is the Object of the beatifical Vision, will never illustrate *lewd* and *filthy* Souls; their Temper being *impervious* unto his heavenly Irradiations, and wholly *indisposed* to be enlighten'd by it; but instead of that it will *irritate* their devilish Rage against it, and provoke them to *bark* at that Light which they cannot *endure*: whereas it no sooner arises upon *well-disposed* Minds, but it will immediately *chase away* all those Reliques of *Darkness* remaining in them, and *transform* them into its own *Likeness*. But doubtless the Sight of the *divine Purity*, and *Goodness*, will be so far from exciting *sensual* and *Devilish* Spirits to *transcribe* and *imitate* it; that it will rather inspire them with *Indignation* against it, and provoke them to *curse* and *blaspheme* the Author of it.

Fourthly and *lastly*, In every *sensual* and *devilish* Soul there is an utter *Incongruity*, and *Disagreement* to the *Society* of the Spirits of *just Men made perfect*. For even in *this* Life we see, how *ungrateful* the Society of *good* Men is unto those that are *wicked*: It *spoils* them of their fulsome Mirth, and *checks* them in those Riots and Scurrilities which are the *Life* and *Piquancy* of their Conversation. So that when the *good* Man takes his Leave, they reckon themselves *delivered*, his Presence being a *Confinement* to their Folly and Wickedness. And as it is in *this*, so doubtless it will be in the *other* World: For how is it possible there should be any *Agreement* between such *distant* and *contrary* Tempers, between such *sensual* and *malicious*, and such *pure* and *benign* Spirits? What a *Torment* would it be to a *spiteful* and *devilish* Spirit to be confined to a *Society* that is governed by the Laws of *Love* and *Friendship*. What an *Infelicity* to a *carnalized* Soul, that nauseates all

Pleasures

Pleasures but what are *fleshly* and *sensual*, to be shut up among those *pure* and *abstracted* Spirits, that live wholly upon the Pleasures of *Wisdom*, and *Holiness*, and *Love*? Doubtless it would be as agreeable to a *Wolf*, to be governed by the *Ten Commandments*, and fed with Lectures of *Philosophy*; as for such a Soul to live under the Laws, and be entertained with the Delights of the *heavenly Society*. So that could these *wicked* Spirits be admitted into the Company of the *Blessed*, they would soon be *weary* of it; and perhaps it would be so *tedious* and *irksome* to them, that they would rather *chuse* to associate themselves with *Devils*, and *damned* Ghosts, than to undergo the *Torment* of a Conversation so infinitely *repugnant* to their Natures; accounting it more *eligible* to live in the dismal Clamour of hellish *Threnes* and *Blasphemies*, than to have a tedious Din of *heavenly Praises* and *Hallelujahs* perpetually ringing in their Ears. And indeed considering the *hellish* Nature of a wicked Soul, how *contrary* it is to the Goodness and Purity of *Heaven*, I have sometimes been apt to think that it will be *less miserable* in those dismal Shades, where the wretched Furies, like so many Snakes and Adders, do nothing but hiss and sting one another *for ever*, than it would be, were it admitted into the *glorious Society* of heavenly Lovers, whose whole Conversation consists in *loving* and *re-loving*, and is nothing else but a perpetual Intercourse of *mutual Indearments*. For this would be an Employment, so infinitely *repugnant* to its *black* and *devilish* Disposition; that rather than endure so much *Outrage* and *Violence*, it would of its *own accord* forsake the *blessed* Abodes, to flee to *Hell* for Sanctuary from the Torment of being in *Heaven*. But this however we may rationally conclude; that so long as the *prevailing* Temper of our Souls is *sensual* and *devilish*, we are *incapable* of the Society of blessed Spirits; and, that if it were possible for us to be admitted into it, our *Condition* would be very *unhappy*, till our *Temper* was chang'd: So that it is a plain Case both from *God's Ordination*; and from the *Nature* of the *Thing*, that our eternal Happiness and Welfare depends upon our *mortifying* the Deeds of the Body.

To offer some *practical Inferences* from hence;

I. We may perceive how *unreasonable* it is, for any Man to presume upon going to Heaven, upon any Account whatsoever, without *mortifying* his Lusts. For he that thinks to go to Heaven without *Mortification* and *Amendment*, presumes both against the *Decrees* of God and the *Nature* of Things: Believes all the *Threatnings* of the Gospel to be nothing else but so many *Bugs* and *Scare-crows*: and though God hath told him again and again, that unless he forsake his *Sins*, he shall never enter into the Kingdom of *Heaven*; yet he fondly imagines, that when it comes to the Trial, God will never be so *severe* as he pretends; but will rather *revoke* the Decree that is gone out of his Mouth, than *exclude* out of the Paradise of endless Delights a Soul that is infinitely *offensive* to him. As if God were so *invincibly* fond and indulgent, as that rather than excommunicate an *obstinate Rebel* from Happiness, he would chuse to *prostitute* the Honour of his *Laws* and *Government*, and commit an Outrage upon the *Rectitude* and *Purity* of his own Nature. For so long as he is a *pure God*, he cannot but be displeased with *impure Souls*; and so long as he is a *wise Governour*, he cannot but be *offended* with those that trample upon his *Laws*: So that before he can admit a *wicked Soul* into Heaven, he must have extinguish'd all his natural Antipathy to *Sin*, and stifled his just Resentment of our wilful *Affronts* to his *Authority*. When therefore we can find any Reason to imagine, that God is no Enemy to *Sin*, and that he hath no Regard of his own *Authority*; then, and not till then, we may have some Pretence to presume upon going to Heaven without *Mortification* and *Amendment*. But supposing this Hinderance were removed, and that God were so *easy* as to be induced to prefer the Happiness of a *wicked* Soul before the *Honour* of his Government and the *Purity* of his Nature; yet still there is an invincible Obstacle behind,

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that renders her future Felicity impossible; and that is, that it cannot be without a plain Contradiction to the *Nature* of *Things*. For as I have shewed you already, the *Genius* and *Temper* of a wicked Soul is wholly *repugnant* to all the Felicities of the *other* World, so that if they were set before her, she would not be able to *enjoy* them, but must be forced to *pine* and *famish* amidst all that *Plenty* of Delights, there being not one Viand in all the heavenly Banquet that she could relish any Sweetness in. Wherefore either *her Nature* must be changed, or the *Nature* of *Heaven*; for while both continue what they are, they are *irreconcileable*: And if God himself were so *easy* and *indulgent*, as to pass by all the Affronts in the *other* World which *wicked* Souls have offered him in *this*; yet he could not make them happy there, without creating in them a *new Heart*, or creating for them a *new Heaven*. For it is altogether as possible for us to see without *Eyes*, or hear without *Ears*, as to enjoy Heaven without a *heavenly Disposition*. How *causelesly* therefore dost thou presume, thou that talkest of going to *Heaven*, whilst thou continuest in thy *Sin*? Alas! poor Wretch, What wouldest thou do there, if upon an *impossible* Supposition thou couldest be admitted into it? There are no *wanton Amours* among those heavenly Lovers, no Rivers of *Wine* among their Rivers of Pleasure, to gratify thy unbounded *Sensuality*; no Paradise to flatter thy *lofty Pride*, no Miseries to feed thy *meager Envy*, no Mischiefs to tickle thy *devilish Revenge*; but all the Felicities, with which that heavenly State abounds, are such as thou wouldst *loath* and *nauseate*, as being too *pure* and *refined* for thy depraved Appetite: So that if thou wert in Heaven, it would be but a *cooler Damnation* to thee; yea perhaps Hell it self would be less intolerable, than a Heaven so *incongruous* to thy Nature. And yet how ordinary is it for *lewd* and *dissolute* Persons, to flatter themselves into *confident Hopes* of Heaven; for which, when they come to be examined, they can give no other Reason but this, that they firmly rely upon the *Merits* of their *Saviour*, who died for them, and obeyed God's Law in their stead; and therefore though they have no Righteousness of *their own*, yet they doubt not, being cloathed in the white Garment of *Christ*, they shall be *pardoned* and *accepted* of God? Which is a Pretence so very *absurd* and *unreasonable*, that one would think it were impossible for any Man to be imposed upon by it, that had not a Mind to deceive himself: For supposing what is false, that Christ did obey the Law in *our stead*, and that God doth account *us* righteous because *He* was so; yet what would this signify to our Pardon and future Happiness, without an *inherent* Righteousness of *our own*; which is so necessary to our future Happiness, that Heaven it self cannot make us happy without it? For if by being *cloathed* in the Robe of *Christ's Righteousness*, we could be admitted into Heaven; yet unless we left behind us our *hellish Disposition*, we should be *miserable* Wretches under that *glorious* Garment; in which we would be only crucified, like *Jesus* in his purple Robe, with greater Scorn and Solemnity. For since the Main of *Heaven* consists in the Perfection of *inherent* Holiness, it necessarily follows that a mere *imputable Holiness*, will only entitle us to an *imputable Happiness*, that is to a mere imaginary Heaven; which how *glorious* soever it may look at a *Distance*, will, when we come to embrace it, glide from between our Arms, and leave us *desperate* and *miserable*. And though 'tis true, that Christ by his *Death* and *Passion* hath purchased for us Pardon and eternal Life; yet it is upon this *Condition*, that we *mortify* our Lust, and *conform* to the Rule of the *Gospel*: And indeed without this, *Pardon* and *eternal Life* are Words that signify nothing; for what doth a Pardon signify to one that is dying of the Stone or Strangury? He can but *die*, if he be *not* pardoned, and *die* he must though he be. And as little Advantage it would be to a *depraved* Soul, to be pardoned and absolved by God, while she hath a Disease *within* her that preys upon her Vitals, and hastens her to a *certain Ruin*: She could have been but *miserable*

serable in the future Life, if she had *not* been pardon'd; and *miserable* she must be, if she continue *wicked*, whether she be *pardoned*, or *no*. All the Advantage that such a Soul could reap from God's pardoning her, would be only to be released from those *arbitrary Punishments*, which God may inflict on her in the World to come; but if she were freed from *these*, yet by a Necessity of *Nature* she must still be extremely *miserable*; for her own *Wickedness* would incapacitate her for *Heaven*, and kindle a perpetual *Hell* within her. So that should Christ have died to obtain a Pardon for those that *continue* in their Sin, he would have died to *no purpose*: For a *wicked* Soul cannot be pardoned, because there is such an *inseparable* Relation between *Sin* and *Punishment*, that it is as great a Contradiction for the *one* to be without the *other*, as for a *Son* to be without a *Father*. And then though Christ by his *Death* hath procured *eternal Life*, yet he cannot have procured it for those that are *unreformed*: Because they, if they might, yet cannot *enjoy* it, their inward *Temper* and *Disposition* being contrary to it; so that unless Christ by his Death had altered the *Nature* of Heaven, and converted that Paradise of *pure* and *holy* Pleasures into a *Seraglio* of *brutish* and *carnal Enjoyments*, he cannot have procured it for *lewd* and *depraved* Souls. So that for any Man to presume upon Heaven upon any Account without *Holiness* and *Amendment*, is the most egregious Non-sense in the World. For *Heaven* is nothing else but *Holiness* in its *Perfection*, freed from all those Incumbrances that here do perpetually clog and annoy it, so that a Heaven without *Holiness*, is a Heaven without a *Heaven*, that is, a Word that signifies nothing, a Happiness wholly abstracted from it self. While therefore we flatter our selves with the Hopes of a *future Bliss*, continuing in our *Sins*, we do but court a *painted Heaven*, and woo *Happiness* in a *Picture*; but in the mean Time are sinking into a *true* and *real Hell*, where all our *foolish Hopes* will be swallowed up *for ever*, in our woful Experience of its *substantial Miseries*.

II. We may discern from hence the *indispensable* Necessity of *Mortification*, since it is plain we can't be *happy* without it: So that to mortifie our *Lusts* is just as necessary for us, as it is to obtain *Heaven*, and avoid *Hell*. For *Virtue* and *Vice* are the Foundations of *Heaven* and *Hell*; *Hell* is nothing but that Hemisphere of *Darkness*, in which all *Sin* and *Wickedness* move; and Heaven is the opposite Hemisphere of *Light*, the glorious Orb of *Holiness*, *Truth* and *Goodness*; and in the Possession of the *one*, or the *other*, we do all of us actually enstate our selves in *this* Life For take *Holiness* and *Virtue* out of Heaven, and all its Glories will immediately be *clouded* in horrid Darkness, and *overcast* with the dismal Shades of Hell: Take *Sin* and *Wickedness* out of Hell, and all its Blackness of Darkness will vanish, and it will presently *clear* up into Light and Serenity, and *shine* out into a glorious Heaven. For 'tis not so much the *Place*, as the *State* that makes either the *one*, or the *other*; and the State of Heaven and Hell, consists in a perfect *Holiness* and *Wickedness*: And proportionably as we do improve in either of these, so we do approach towards Heaven, or Hell. For as *Heaven* is the Center of all that is *virtuous*, *pure*, and *holy*; and every Thing that is *good* tends thither by a *natural* Sympathy: So *Hell* is the Center of all *Impiety* and *Wickedness*; and whatsoever is *bad* doth naturally press and sink down thither, as towards its proper *Place* and *Element*. And should not the divine Vengeance concern it self in *excluding* wicked Souls out of Heaven, yet their *own Wickedness* would do it; for that is a Place of such *inaccessible Light* and *Purity*, that nothing that is *impure* can approach it; but must of Necessity be beaten off by the *perpetual Lightnings* of its Glory, and tumbled headlong down as oft as ever it essays to climb up into it. As on the other Hand, should not God by an immediate Vengeance *precipitate* wicked Souls into Hell, yet their own *Sin* and *Wickedness*, hasten'd by the mighty Weight of its own *Nature* would necessarily hurry them down

down thither with a most *swift* and *headlong* Motion. And if this be so, then questionless it is as necessary for us not to *continue* in our Sin, as it is not to be *excluded* out of Heaven, nor *thrust down* into the Flames of Hell: And did we but know what is meant, doubtless we should run away from our *Sins* in a greater Fright and Maze, than ever we did from the most *astonishing Danger*. For consider, O Man, by those *short Pleasures* with which thou treatest thy Lusts, thou excommunicatest thy self from *eternal Joys*; and wouldst thou be but so wise as to deny thy self the Pleasure of a *Moment*, thou mightest be pleased *for ever*, and Millions of *Ages* hence be rejoycing among *Angels* and *blessed Spirits*, because thou wouldest not gratifie thy self with those *fulsome Delights*, which would have died away in the Enjoyment. And is it possible that thou shouldst be so besotted, as to exchange the Pleasures of an *immortal Heaven*, for those of an *intemperate Draught*, to sell the Joy of *Angels* for the Embraces of an *Harlot*, and pawn thy Part in *Paradise* for a little *Money*, of which 'ere long thou wilt have no other Use, but only to purchase six Foot of Earth, and a Winding-sheet? O most prodigious Folly! What Account canst thou give for such an *extravagant Bargain*, at the Tribunal of thy own *Reason*? But it may be you will say: *What doth the Loss of Heaven signify, since* (as you have told us already) *if we could be admited to it, it could be no Heaven to us? And why should we think much of losing that which we cannot enjoy?* To which I answer; 'Tis true you cannot *enjoy* it, unless you part with your *Lusts*; because *Heaven*, and *they* are *inconsistent*: But you may part with your *Lusts*, if you *will*; and being quit of *these*, you may and shall *enjoy* it *for ever*. Your *Sin* is the only Wall of *Separation* between *you* and *Heaven*; which being once demolished, you may *enter* into it without any Interruption, and take *Possession* of all its Glories. So that if you think the Loss of *Heaven* will be no *Trouble* to you in the other World, because it is such an Heaven as your *depraved* Souls will be *averse* to, you are infinitely mistaken; for though you *will* be *averse* to it, yet your own *Consciences* will tell you, that if you *would*, you might have *conquer'd* that Aversation, as well as those *blessed Spirits* that do enjoy it; and that if you had done so, *you* might have been infinitely *happy* as well as *they*. Whereas now you are condemned to wander *for ever* in a *woful Eternity*, tormented with a *restless* Rage, and *hungry unsatisfied* Desire after these *sensual Goods* you have left behind you, and to which you shall never return more; the Consideration of which will render the Loss of Heaven as *grievous* to you, as if it were a Heaven overflowing with *sensual* Delights, and abounding with *such Joys*, as you will then hunger after, but can never enjoy. For how will it sting you to the Heart, when you shall thus ruminate with your selves, as you are wandring through the Infernal Shades; *Ah besotted Fool that I am! now I see too late, that Heaven is a State wherein a Soul may be infinitely happy; look how yonder blessed Spirits are imparadised! how they exult and triumph! how they sing and give Praise, and are rapt into Extasies of Love and Joy! whilst I through my own Sensuality and Devilishness am utterly incapable of those sublime Delights whereof their Heaven is composed; and like a forlorn Wretch, am left for ever Destitute of those sensual Pleasures, which are the only Heaven I can now enjoy.* And therefore as you would not spend an Eternity in such *direful Reflections*, and have those *dismal Thoughts* like so many Vultures preying upon you *for ever*; be persuaded to set presently upon this *great* and *necessary* Work of *Mortification*. For assure your selves, God will as soon let *Hell* loose into *Heaven*, and people the Regions of *immortal Bliss* with the Inhabitants of the *Land* of *Darkness*, as crown a *wicked* Soul with the glorious Reward of *eternal Life*. For God hath reduced us to this Issue, either our *Sins*, or our *Souls* must die; and we must shake Hands with *Heaven*, or our *Lusts*: So that unless we value *eternal Happiness* so little, as to exchange it for the *sordid* and *trifling* Pleasures of *Sin*; and unless we love our *Sins* so well, as to ransom them with the Blood of our immortal *Souls*; it concerns us speedily to shake

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off our *Sins* by *Repentance:* For this is an *eternal* and *immutable* Law, that, if we will be *wicked*, we muſt be *miſerable*.

III. From hence we may perceive, what is the only *true* and *ſolid* Froundation of our *Aſſurance* of Heaven, namely, our *mortifying* the Deeds of the Body; for if *they that mortiſy the Deeds of the Body ſhall live*, then if we do, or have *mortified* them, we are ſure that we are entitled to *eternal Life*. So that to be *aſſured* of Heaven, we need not go about to ſpell out our Names in the *Stars*, or to read them in the ſecret Volumes of *eternal Predeſtination:* For if *our* Wills be but ſo ſubdued to the Will of *God*, that we do not live in any *wilful Violation* of his Laws; we may be as certainly perſuaded of our Intereſt in *eternal Life*, as if one of the winged Meſſengers from above ſhould come down and tell us, that he ſaw our *Names* enrolled in the Volumes of *Eternity*. For beſides that God hath *promiſed* Heaven to us upon Condition of our *Mortification*, we ſhall, when our *Luſts* are throughly *ſubdued*, feel Heaven opening itſelf within us, and riſing up from the Center of our Souls in a *divine* Life and *God-like* Nature: So that we ſhall not need to ſeek for Heaven *without* us, becauſe we ſhall find it already come down *into* us, and tranſcribed into our own *Natures*. And as we *grow* in Grace from one Degree to another, ſo Heaven will break forth *clearer* and *clearer* upon us; and the nearer we approach to the Top of the *Hill*, the fuller View we ſhall have of the *Horizon*, and extended *Sky*; till at laſt we come to walk all along in Sight of *Heaven*, and to travel towards it in a full *View* and *Aſſurance* of it. But if we *ſecure* our ſelves of *Heaven*, before we have *mortified* our *Luſts*, we do but entertain our *Fancies* with a *golden* Dream; which when we awake will vaniſh away, and leave us *deſperate* and *miſerable*. If therefore we would be *aſſured* of our future *Happineſs*, let us not trouble our ſelves with numerous *Signs* of *Grace*; nor go about to erect *Schemes* of our ſpiritual *Nativity*, to caſt a Figure to know whether we have Grace or were converted *ſecundum artem:* But let us impartially examine whether *our Wills* are ſo *ſubdued* to the *Will* of *God*, as univerſally to *chuſe* what he *enjoyns*, and *refuſe* what he *forbids*. For if they *are*, our Condition is *good*, and our Hope *ſecure* by what Means or Motives ſoever it was effected; and whether they *are* or *no*, we need no *Marks* or *Signs* to reſolve us: For our *Thoughts* and *Reſolutions* and *Intentions* are *Signs* enough to themſelves, and we need no *Marks* to know what it is that we chuſe and refuſe: This our *Soul* can eaſily diſcern by that *innate Power* ſhe hath of reflecting upon our own Motions, by which ſhe doth as naturally feel her own *Deliberations* and *Volitions*, as the *Body* doth its *Hunger* and *Thirſt*. 'Tis true, indeed, *holy Diſpoſitions*, like all other *Motions*, the *weaker* they are, and the more they are *interrupted* by contrary Motions and Inclinations, the *leſs* they will be *perceived*; which is the Reaſon, why *Beginners* in Religion cannot be ſo *ſenſible* of the Grace that is in them; becauſe their *good* Inclinations are *checked* and *hinder'd* by the ſtrong and vehement Counter-Motions of their *Luſts:* But the more their *good* Inclinations *prevail* and *free* themſelves from theſe *contrary* Inclinations which clog and incumber them, the more their Souls will be *ſenſible* of them. For this we find by Experience, that as we perceive our own Motions, the more *vigorous* they are, the more we *perceive* them; eſpecially when they are *adviſed* and *deliberate*, as all *virtuous* Motions and Inclinations are. For that a Man ſhould be *inſenſible* of a Motion which he exerts *adviſedly*, or not be able to *know* that he is ſo diſpoſed when he is *knowingly* ſo diſpoſed, implies a *Contradiction:* And indeed, if we are not able to know when we *chooſe* and *refuſe* as we ſhould, when we *reſolve* well and *intend* aright, we cannot diſcern when we *do* right or wrong; but are left to a Neceſſity of acting at *Random*, like Travellers in the Dark, that go on at a Venture without knowing whether they go backward or forward. If we cannot know when we do well, it is impoſſible we ſhould know *how* to do well; but muſt neceſſarily leave the Conduct of our Actions to *Chance*, and *Fortune* muſt determine us unto *right* or *wrong*. Since therefore our *Soul* is not a *ſenſeleſs* Machine,

that hath *no Perception* of her own Motions, but is naturally *sensible* of whatsoever is transacted within her; let us no longer excuse our *Ignorance* of our own Condition with that common Pretence, that our *Hearts* are *deceitful* and *hypocritical:* For our *Hearts* are our *selves*, and, if *they* are *deceitful* and *hypocritical*, we our *selves* are so. And yet I know not how it comes to pass, it passes among some Men for a great Sign of *Grace* and *Sincerity*, to complain of the *Falseness* and *Hypocrisy* of their own *Hearts*; not considering that *Men* are as their *Hearts* are, and that if *these* are hypocritical, they *themselves* are Hypocrites. If therefore our Complaint be *true*, the more Shame for us: This is so far from being a Sign that we have *Grace*, that it is a plain Confession that we are *graceless Dissemblers.* If our Complaint be *false*, we falsly accuse our selves in it; which is also so far from being a Sign of *Grace*, that it is an Argument only of our own *extravagant Folly.* But if we *mistake* in our Complaint, and think that to be *Hypocrisy*, which is not, we should seek to be better *informed*: And if when you are *so*, you still complain of your *Hypocrisy*, I doubt you have too much *Reason* for it; and if *you fear* that you are Hypocrites, I *fear* you are so too. For why should one that *knows* what an Hypocrite is, *fear* that he is an Hypocrite; were he not *conscious* to himself, that he doth dissemble with God, and under an open *Pretence* of *submitting* to Him, *disguise* some secret Purpose of *rebelling* gainst him? Let us therefore lay aside all our *impertinent* Scrupulosity, and fairly examine our own Souls, whether we do submit to God without any *Reserve*, and are willing to lay down all our *beloved Lusts* at his Feet: For whether we *are* or no, we may easily discern if we *will.* If we *are*, then are the *Foundations* of *Heaven* already laid within our own Bosoms; and if upon this Principle we grow in *Grace*, and add one Degree of *Virtue* to another, we may be sure the *Superstructure* will go on, untill the whole *Fabrick* of our Happiness is compleated. For as *Nature* by its powerful Magick is continually drawing every Thing unto its proper *Place*, and *Center*; so *Heaven* attracts to itself, and freely imbosoms every Thing that is *heavenly*; and thrusts off nothing but what is *unfit* for and *heterogeneous* to it. If therefore our *Souls* be of a *pure* and *heavenly* Temper, *Heaven* is the *Center* of our Motions, and the *proper* Place whereunto we belong; and whither at last we shall safely arrive, in despite of all those dismal Shades of Darkness, that would beat us back, and interrupt our Progress towards it: But, on the contrary, if we *secure* our selves of *Heaven* while we are *enslaved* to any *Lusts*, we presume *unreasonably*; and embark our Hopes in a *leaky Bottom*, which in Stress of Weather will certainly *founder* under us, and *sink* us into utter *Despair:* For how can we hope to be admitted into *Heaven*, whilst we retain that within our own *Bosoms* which kindles *Hell*, and is the *Spring* of the Lake of *Fire* and *Brimstone*? This would be a *confounding* of utter Darkness with the Regions of Light, a *blending* of Heaven and Hell together.

Fourthly and *lastly*, from hence it appears what is the *great Design* of the Christian Religion. We may be sure, God would not have sent his *Son* into the World, had not the *Embassy* upon which he was employ'd been of the *highest Moment* and *Concernment* to us: And what other *End*, besides doing the *greatest Good*, could a *good* God propose in so *great* a Transaction? Surely had we been in Heaven, when the *Holy One* descended thence into the World, though we had not known the *Particulars* of his Errand, yet we should have concluded that doubtless he was employ'd upon some *great* Design of *Love*; to communicate from the Almighty Father some *mighty Blessing* to the World: And accordingly we find, that though the *holy Angels* did not comprehend the *particular Intention*, and *Mystery* of Christ's Incarnation; yet they concluded in the general, that it was intended for some *great* Good to the World; as is apparent by the Anthem they sang at his Nativity, *Glory be to God on high, on Earth Peace, good Will towards Men.* Now the greatest Expression of God's *good Will* towards Men is to *rescue* them from all *Iniquity*, and

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restore them to the *Purity* and *Perfection* of their Natures: For without *this* all the Blessings of Heaven and Earth are not *sufficient* to make us *happy*. While our Nature is *debauch'd* and over-grown with unreasonable *Lusts* and *Passions*, we must be *miserable*, notwithstanding all that an Omnipotent Goodness can do for us: For *Misery* is so essential to *Sin*, that we may as well be *Men* without being *reasonable*, as *sinful* Men without being *miserable*. Since therefore the *End* of Christ's Coming into the World was to dispense God's *greatest Blessings* to Mankind; and since the *greatest Blessing* that we can receive from God is to be *redeemed* by his Grace from our *Iniquities*, and to be made *Partakers* of the *divine Nature*; we may reasonably conclude, that *this* was his main *Design* in the World, and the great *End* of that everlasting *Gospel* which he revealed to it. And hence the Name *Jesus* was given him by the Direction of an Angel, because he should *save his People from their Sins:* Matth. i. 21. And indeed I cannot imagine any Design whatsoever, excepting *this*, that could be worthy the *Son* of *God's* coming down into the World, to live such a *miserable* Life, and die such a *shameful* Death. Had it been only to save us from a *Plague*, or *War* or *Famine*, it had been an Undertaking fit for the *lowest Angel* in the heavenly Hierarchy: But to save us from our *Sins* was an Enterprize so *great* and *good*, as *none* in Heaven or Earth, but the *Son* of *God* himself, was thought *worthy* to be employed in. This therefore was the *Mark* of all his *Aims*, while he was upon Earth, the *Center* in which all his *Actions* and *Sufferings* met, to save us from our *Sins*, and to inspire us with a *divine* Life and *God-like* Nature; that thereby we might be *disposed* for the Enjoyment of *Heaven*, and made to be *meet Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*. 'Tis true, he died to procure our *Pardon* too; but it was with respect to a farther *End*; namely, that we might not grow *desperate* with the Sense of our *Guilt*, but that by the Promise of *Pardon*, which he hath *purchased* for us, we might be encouraged to *repent* and *amend*. But should he have procured a *Pardon* for our Sin, whether we had *repented* of it or *no*; he would have only *skinned* over a Wound, which if it be not perfectly *cured*, will rankle of its own accord into an incurable *Gangrene*. Christ therefore by the Offering of himself is said *to purge our Consciences from dead Works, that we might serve the living God:* Heb. ix. 14. And the great Apostle makes the *ultimate* Intention of his giving himself for us to be this, *that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works:* Tit. ii. 14. And until his *Death* hath had *this* Effect upon us, it is not all the Merit of his *Blood* and Virtue of his *Sacrifice*, that can *release* us from the direful *Punishments* of the other Life. For unless he by his *Death* had so altered the *Nature* of *Sin*, as that it might be in us without being a *Plague* to us; it must necessarily, if we carry it with us into the other World, prove a perpetual *Hell* and *Torment* to us. So that it is apparent, that the great and *ultimate* Design of Christ, was not to *hide* our filthy Sores, but to *heal* and *cure* them: And for this End it was that he revealed to us the *Grace of God* from Heaven, *to teach us to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present World*, Tit. ii. 12. Let us not therefore *cheat* our own Souls, by thinking that the *Gospel* requires nothing of us but only to be holy by *Proxy*, or righteous by being cloathed in the Garments of *another's Righteousness*; as if its Design was not so much to *cure*, as cover our filthy Sores, not to make us *whole*, but to make us *accounted* so. For can any Man imagine, that Christ would ever have undertaken such a mighty Design, and made so great a Noise of doing something; which when it is all summed up is nothing but a *Notion*, and doth not at last amount unto a *Reality*? As if the great Design of his coming down from Heaven to *live* and *die* for us, was only to make a *Cloak* for our *Sins*, wherein we might *appear* righteous before God without *being* so. But do not deceive your selves; it is not all the *Innocence* and *Obedience* of Christ's Life, nor all

the *Virtue* and *Merit* of his Death, that can render you *pure* and *holy* in God's Eyes; unless you *really* are so: And you may as well be *Well* with another's Health, or *wise* with another's Wisdom, as *righteous* before God with the Righteousness of Christ, while you *abide* in your *Sins*. For God sees you as you *are*; and the most glorious *Disguise* you can appear in before him will never be able to delude his all-seeing Eye, so as to make him account you *Righteous* when you are *not*: And if it were possible for you to impose upon *God*, yet unless you could also impose upon the *Nature* of Things, and by *fancying* them to be otherwise than they *are*, make them to *be* what they are *not*, it will be to no purpose. For if you could be cloathed in *Christ's Righteousness*, while you continue *wicked*; it would signify no more to your *Happiness*, than it would to be cloathed in a most *splendid* Garment, while you were pining with *Famine* or tortured with the *Gout* or *Strangury*. Wherefore as we love our own *Souls*, and would not betray our selves into an *irrecoverable Ruin*, let us firmly conclude with our selves, that the great Design of our Religion is *internal Holiness* and *Righteousness*; and that without *this*, all that Christ hath *done* and *suffered* for us will be so far from contributing to our *Happiness*, that it will prove an eternal Aggravation to our *Misery*; and that all that precious *Blood*, which he shed in our behalf, will be so far from obtaining *Pardon* and eternal *Happiness* for us, that it will arise in *Judgment* against us; and like the innocent Blood of *Abel*, instead of interceeding for us, will cry down *Vengeance* from Heaven upon us. For how can we imagine, that the *pure* and *holy Jesus*, who hated our *Sins* more than all the *Pangs* and Horrours of a woful Death, should all of a sudden be so *kind* to *them*, as to give them *Shelter* and *Sanctuary* within his own *meritorious* Wounds; and to make his Blood the Price of a general *Indulgence* to all *Impiety* and *Wickedness*, that so we might sin *securely*, and enjoy a safe *Retreat* from his Authority under the Covert of his *Sacrifice*? But be not deceived; the *holy Jesus* will never make himself an *unholy Saviour* for your sake; and your being called by the Name of *Christ*, is so far from giving you a *Privilege* to *Sin*, that it lays you under a stricter *Restraint*; and if you *violate* it, it will expose you to a *severer* Punishment, than if you had been *Heathens* and *Infidels*. For this is the great Proposal of our Religion, that *Jesus Christ* died to purchase *Pardon*, and *eternal Life*, for all that do *repent* and *amend*; but if we will go on in our *Sin*, we are at a greater *Distance* from *Pardon* and *eternal Life*, than if we never had had a *Saviour* to undertake for us.

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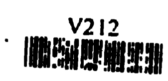
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